THE GROWTH OF MODERN NATIONS

A HISTORY OF THE PARTICULARIST FORM OF SOCIETY

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF HENRI DE TOURVILLE

BY

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LONDON
EDWARD ARNOLD
1907

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TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

THE following Prefatory Notice was inserted by the Editors in the original edition :—

"The present volume is a collection of articles written by Henri de Tourville, which appeared in the review entitled *Science Sociale* from February 1897 to February 1903, under the title of *Histoire de la Formation particulariste.*

"The Author died a few days after completing the last chapter of his work.

"We have not ventured in any way to modify the form in which the work first appeared. Each article forms a chapter in this book.

"But whilst we have retained the title which Henri de Tourville himself chose for his work, 'A History of the Particularist Form of Society,' a title intelligent enough in a special review and to readers familiar with his ideas, we thought it necessary to add as a supplementary title, 'The Origin and Development of the Leading Nations of the Present Day,' with the idea that it would be more comprehensible to the public at large and would make the purport and interest of the book more evident."

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THE GROWTH OF MODERN NATIONS

CHAPTER I

THE ORIGIN OF THE GERMANIC AND GOTHIC RACES

THE transformation of the patriarchal into the particularist family was brought about in Scandinavia, a geographical area including Norway, Sweden, and Denmark. Scandinavia is divided from end to end into two slopes, one inclining towards the east and the other westwards. On the eastern slope it received the communal family; on the western it produced the particularist family. Of all the changes Nature has wrought in the human race by her influence alone, that is by far the greatest.

Intensive cultivation is man's chief work on the eastern slope. This, however, applies only to its southern end, as the northern end forms part of the glacial region. The southern end lies in the Baltic, the northern in the Gulf of Bothnia.

On the western slope, from north to south, fishing, combined with small farming, is the chief occupation.

Such, in a word, is the scene of operations.

In the transformation of the communal into the particularist family both slopes played their part. For, though the metamorphosis was completed on the western slope, certain elements that were indispensable to the change were contributed by the eastern slope. This is easy of proof. For, as a matter of fact, certain races that have been known to settle on the western slope without previously undergoing any modification on the

eastern slope have not produced the particularist family. Thus the northern end of Norway, over which the Norwegians have now spread, has been inhabited from the beginning by Laps, who came thither from their tundras direct; and the Laps have continued to live a thoroughly communal life.

In the first place, then, we must consider what distinctive elements were contributed by the eastern slope; and afterwards we will study the transformation which the western slope effected in these distinctive elements.

Before their settlement, the people that made their homes on the eastern slope were of a social type somewhat analogous to that of the Celts. This does not imply that they were Celtic in origin; for they belonged to a later migration—the migration of the Germans. But, in their travels, influenced by similar conditions, they acquired characteristics not unlike those of the Celts.

The Celts were shepherds who drove their flocks from pasture to pasture, across the wooded lands of Europe, following the attractive road formed by the rich and open steppes of the Danube. The valley of the Danube is open in this sense, that its fruitful steppes form, as it were, a regular funnel. Once in the funnel, nomads were compelled to pass the "Iron Gates," and upon emerging on the other side they were taken in a trap. The vast rich lands of Hungary lay before them, and there they devoured the bait till others entered after them. When pressed forward by those that came behind, they followed the passage of the Danube between Vienna and Passau; on reaching the Bavarian plateau they separated, and, crossing the two thresholds of the Rhine, the one above Constance and the other above Bâle, they at length found their way into the broad zone of forests inhabited by the Gauls.

The Germans were shepherds who drove their flocks from pasture to pasture, across the wooded lands of Europe—following a different track through the steppes—those barren steppes farther north, the entrance to which is blocked in great measure by a continuous line of obstacles, formed by the lagoons at the lower part of the Baltic, by the broad belt of Lithuanian forests, by the impassable marshes of Pinsk and the sparsely wooded slopes of the Carpathians.

A grassy passage lying just between the wooded slopes of the Carpathians and the marshes of Pinsk forms the entrance

to the steppe; there is a narrow way through from Kieff to Lublin, over the last slopes of the Carpathians, just where the woods have ended and the marshes are about to begin; this band of steppes forms an isthmus between Russia and Germany.

Even now it is the chief gateway. Farther north it is necessary to pass above the marshes of Pinsk in order to clear the succession of bogs formed by the Beresina—a passage that was made famous by that sad disaster the recollection of which is enough to make us appreciate its difficulties.

The steppe of Germany opens beyond this Kieff-Lublin pass. It has a very remarkable formation: it penetrates into the heart of Europe like a large wedge, and takes an oblique direction, thus guiding immigrants by imperceptible degrees from south to north. It has indeed been made by a master hand, and God had in mind the destinies of the human race. The aim in view was to lead a race of shepherds from the east to the extreme west and from the south to the extreme north in such a way that they might be safe from the bands of adventurers from the great empires of the Mediterranean and from the sterilising influence of the glacial region. This slanting line is drawn between the two, and reaches from end to end. The thing is done!

The shepherds took this route in a body only when that of the Danube, which was farther south, richer, and more attractive, was choked up.

The scattered hunters of the paleolithic period had gone before them, followed by bands of hunters, who must have gone as far north as the land of Denmark, to judge by the immense heaps of culinary rubbish which they left there. These in succession had cleared the country of most of the wild and ferocious animals that might have been dangerous to the flocks or have deprived them of their means of existence. They had, moreover, made tracks and resting-places in many parts; they had opened up the road at difficult points. But here, as elsewhere, they were bound to disappear before the regular, solid, and organised advance of the shepherds.

Now that the shepherds have entered the obliquely slanting steppe of Germany in large numbers and in good order, let us see what they become; and with this object let us examine the curious formation of the steppe in greater detail.

This great "wedge" which juts into Europe was still under the sea at the end of the quaternary period and at the beginning of the present geological era. It is a vast sandy plain, studded with moist and fertile patches. The fact that it was under the sea accounts for the alternation of dry and damp areas in the north of Germany—where, however, the dry places are the more extensive—and for the medley of barren steppes, wooded oases, marshes, and lakes. The forests, which consist chiefly of evergreen trees, end at the plain's edge as abruptly as the lakes, because the conditions of their growth are quite local and have precise limits, and in this way the steppe passes in its full breadth into the midst of land sprinkled with clumps of green trees and inland lakes.

It is clearly a land equally attractive to the wanderer or the settler—which would account for the perpetual alternations of two kinds of inhabitants in that part of Germany; for it was periodically invaded by the nomads and reconquered by the stationary tribes.

This will be better explained by what follows.

In the period before it dried up, the sea which of old occupied this space seems to have been no more than a vast gulf with a large opening towards the east, but bordered by two banks to north and south. On the south its waves beat against the northern slopes of the Carpathians and the chains which prolong them to the west. On the north they washed the Baltic hills, which are for a short distance parallel to the Baltic Sea.

Though these two barriers that enclose the gulf to north and south are very far apart towards the east, they approach one another towards the west until they join in a blunt angle east of the Elbe. They are represented to-day by the two bands of fertile land in the Germanic plain. Like all submarine regions that are bordered by hills, these two bands have been covered by rich deposits brought down from the upper basins by the rains. The southern band exhibits this phenomenon to a striking degree, because it remained a seacoast for a much longer time; the northern belt owes its relative fertility rather to a somewhat less barren primitive subsoil, and also to the shelter afforded by the Baltic hills and to its slope, which is for the most part towards the southern sun. In certain privileged spots it can produce even vines.

Whilst the shepherds found, and would still find to-day, a broad route by the steppes at the bottom of the ancient sea, those who wished or were forced to fall out by the way had at their disposal the two fertile bands, where they could conveniently settle.

In every epoch of history the peculiar physical constitution of the country has been largely responsible for the political and administrative divisions of Germany, which in their turn accentuate the features of its structure.

At the present time the old southern bank is marked by Galicia, Silesia, Lusatia, and the kingdom of Saxony, all rich lands situated lengthwise at the foot of the Carpathians and the ranges which extend beyond. The northern band is marked by the duchy of Prussia, Pomerania, and Mecklenburg, also rich lands situated lengthwise along the Baltic. Between these two bands the broad areas of Poland and the duchy of Posen are fitted in so as to form a triangle; they are poor and barren countries. The Polish element in Poland and the duchy of Posen, which penetrates, as it were, like a wedge into Germany, still shows very clearly the point to which the nomads of all time have tended through the centre of the steppe.

In the first centuries of our era, when the great eastern invasions of Wends and Slavs took place, the new tribes of barbarians were distributed over the surface of Germany in exactly the same way. In the Middle Ages it was the same thing again.

With this knowledge of the structure of the area, it is easy to understand that those who were at the head of the Germanic invasion pushed straight on with their flocks and horses to the extreme point of the steppe, and that there they came upon the land which seemed to invite them most pressingly to take up a rudimentary kind of agriculture, an occupation to which they were forced to turn by the incessant pressure of those behind. This spot is most favourable, because the two fertile bands here close in towards one another, and thus form a broader space for cultivation. If a tribe settled there it could remain more compact, and ran less risk of being divided than in other places. In fact, it was there that the famous Suevi lived in Roman times of whom Cæsar says, "Suevorum gens est longe maxima et bellicosissima Germanorum omnium: hi centum pagos habere dicuntur" (iv. 1). They had been

able to keep close together in large groups. In the Middle Ages the March of Brandenburg occupied this very place; it was the great fulcrum for the reconquest of the Germanic steppe which the Slavs had conquered from one end to the other. In modern times, too, it is owing to her central position between the two bands that close in from the north and the south that Berlin exercises such powerful control over the German territory of the Baltic plain and unites it to the part beyond and to the Saxon plain.

It will not be out of place here to give one more detail, which will complete our knowledge, from the point of view of Social Science, of the wonderful natural configuration of the land of Germany. It is necessary to be well acquainted with it, not only for the question now before us, but also for all the rest of our investigation.

It must be observed, then, that though these fertile bands are far apart, they are connected with one another by convenient river-ways, which pass directly from one to the other across the steppe. It is true the general flow of water, the "thalweg" of the steppe, is from east to west, like the steppe itself; it is indicated by the Bug, the mid-Vistula, the Wartha, and the Spree, which is a tributary of the Elbe. But these rivers, instead of forming a continuous stream, form a line interrupted at intervals, for at the point where one would be about to join on to the end of another, it is abruptly divided from it by a rise in the ground, and also by transverse river-beds, which descend straight from the Carpathians and connect the south with the north. On the map these river-beds, that stretch from the slopes of the Carpathians to the Baltic hills, appear like cables fastening together the two shores of the ancient sea. In reality they are water-ways which link together the agricultural populations on the two fertile bands, situated as they are some distance apart. It is by these natural roads that pass from the fertile bands across the barren centre that the unity of Germany is secured.

Now at the point in which we are at present interested—that is to say, at the western extremity of the steppe—the junction between the two fertile bands—which are, moreover, very near together—is formed not by a single river but by a whole network of lakes and water-ways. The inhabitants of to-day, as did those

of past times, use them as means of communication from north to south and east to west. The peasants of all the country side for miles round Berlin use boats as their only means of transport.

This explains how the country of Germany is, broadly speaking, united, in spite of the steppe that penetrates so far into it and separates the fertile regions. Above all it brings out very clearly the peculiarly favourable conditions of the terminal point of the Germanic plain.

Now the new light thus thrown upon our scene of action brings us a step forward in the study of our subject. The formation of the whole German plain, and especially of the region between the Elbe and the Oder, which is composed of fertile lands interspersed among watery areas, had its influence upon the Germanic tribes. It made them learn water-craft, though they were inland people, while at the same time they were able to practise land cultivation. Those of them who were driven out into Jutland and the Danish islands were thus prepared beforehand for the exigencies of their new dwelling-place.

Such were in detail the geographical conditions of the country which the Goths originally inhabited before passing into Scandinavia.

Though the place we have described was certainly advantageous to settlers, yet it had drawbacks for the first-comers, as it was the particular point to which the whole movement of the shepherds across the Germanic steppe tended. All the nomad invasions of the east into Lower Germany have passed unhesitatingly to that privileged place. Even at the present day Berlin looks with some anxiety towards the east, for Poland, which is as much Russian as German, brings the east very near her; the duchy of Posen, too, is not very far off. Thus the first occupants, afterwards the Goths, and later the Swabians, who came behind them, found themselves pushed towards the west by the pressure of the column of nomads which kept coming up from the south-east.

On leaving the end of the Germanic steppe, the traveller comes upon three very different kinds of soil. If he goes straight to the west, he comes upon the great waste lands by the shores of the North Sea, a region comparable to the moors of Gascony—a desert land with marshes and pine forests on sand! If he takes an oblique direction towards the south-west, he comes

upon the mountains of Thuringia and Hesse—a Saxon Switzerland with promise of nothing but poverty and isolation. But if, on the other hand, he turns to the north-west, the traveller finds the continuation of the fertile band of soil; this band, however, becomes smaller and smaller till it finally disappears opposite the island of Fyen, midway up the coast of Denmark. These are the three blind alleys that close the Germanic steppe at the Elbe.

The first Germans had therefore to come to a decision. Those who happened upon the moors or on the mountains pushed towards the Rhine to seek their living. They soon came into collision with the Celts. The vanguard forced its way into the north of Gaul, where it mingled with the Belgians; but the main body settled in the regions between the Elbe and the Rhine, where it degenerated. It may be observed that they underwent no change when they came in contact with the North Sea beside the barren moors any more than did their precursors the hunters or the Laps of Norway.

Those, however, who followed the fertile band as far as the middle of the Danish peninsula were in much the same situation as were the Pelasgians on the coasts of Asia Minor. At a very short distance from the shore they saw an archipelago which offered them a safe retreat from the nomads. They reached it easily by boat. There they encountered only the necessarily weak resistance of the Fins—for stationary or semi-stationary tribes have great facilities for expelling semi-hunters or semi-shepherds, and especially for expelling them from islands! It is a fact that constantly recurs.

The Goths have now reached the eastern slope of Scandinavia. We know their stock-in-trade. They are shepherds who have turned into rudimentary farmers with a knowledge of water-craft.

The soil of this country is far more fertile than that of Germany. Besides, the sea wards off incursions. It even separates the tribes into isolated groups. In this way the Goths pass to an agricultural and completely sedentary life.

From thorough peasants they became intensive cultivators, *i.e.* they used artificial means for increasing the natural fertility of the soil. They kept the Fins as slaves and employed them for manual labour; but they themselves worked the soil and ploughed.

They brought with them from the German plain all the domestic animals, horses, oxen, sheep, and pigs.

The horse, which was everything to them in the great steppe, thenceforward lost much of his importance; the Eddas tell us that the ancestor of the Giants, who represent the Goths, is the *cow* "Hudhumbla." Carriages and carts were soon invented, as is shown by the monuments of the Bronze Age; corn was grown and wool was spun.

The superiority of their products over those of their neighbours gave them opportunities for commerce. They exchanged the surplus of their corn and wool for the furs of all sorts which the Fins, who lived on the east of the Baltic and of the Gulf of Bothnia, were able to procure in great abundance.

These furs from the north might have been a true source of riches in their hands; the same might be said, and with even better reason, of the yellow amber from the coasts of Denmark, the earliest kind known. But the absence of any large market in the south made trade in these goods somewhat limited.

However, living as they did on islands and on much indented coasts very near together, the Goths could not fail to use the sea. The strong currents in their seas and straits soon brought them to construct large boats. They became accustomed to seafaring.

On the other hand, the Baltic coast to the south and the east of the Oder is, as it were, half sea, half land, and makes navigation extremely difficult; it is this (we may remark in passing) which even at the present day prevents the Prussians from naturally acquiring a real, living maritime power, in spite of their efforts and pretensions. Moreover, in winter the coast is ice-bound.

Hence, in spite of the comparison we made just now between the Goths and the Pelasgians there is a terrible difference between the Baltic and the Mediterranean, for the latter smiles upon the sailor, and is bordered by the richest coasts, and is near to the richest empires! Scandinavia is no more than a strip of temperate land jutting out into the midst of ice.

So our Gothic peasants, though they found opportunities for progress which made them very superior to the mass of half-wandering Germans, were, after all, only rustics, good at farming, well-to-do, peaceful, illiterate folks. That they were

of this peculiar type is proved beyond a doubt by all the evidence furnished by history and archæology, as well as by Social Science, which has enabled us to establish it by a study of their resources.

We now know the first element which the eastern slope of Scandinavia will provide for the peopling of the western. Among shepherds who have become intensive farmers the patriarchal system gradually weakens; a breach is made in the community by the capable members still more than by the others; instead of a swarm going forth at rare intervals, a constant emigration of capable individuals takes place.

This, then, is what the eastern slope can send to the western: individually capable emigrants with some knowledge of agriculture.

Nor has it been slow in sending them forth. At the beginning of the Christian era there were people already spread, or rather scattered few and far between, over the coasts of Norway within a certain distance of Gothland, the southern part of Sweden.

But before following these emigrants to the western slope to see what becomes of them, and how they change into heads of particularist families, we are bound to consider another element which appears on the eastern slope, and which has exercised a powerful influence upon the phenomenon we are examining.

It is obvious that what is lacking in shepherds who have become peasants, and have no opportunities of commerce within reach, is progress in the customary arts, intellectual culture, and political power, even though their community may be more or less well organised in other respects. This second element, which Greece and Italy received from the beginning from the Pelasgians and fostered by their trade with the Phœnicians and Carthaginians, is the urban, or, as we say, the *urbane* element, what we more familiarly denote by the equivocal word "civilisation" (*civitas*, civilisation; *urbs*, urbanity).

Gothland in her isolation did not receive this urbane element till the beginning of the Christian era. She received it not from the Romans, who were then masters of the seas and took the lead in useful arts, nor from the Gauls, who were her nearest, most civilised, and urbane neighbours, but from the east, by that same road across the steppe which had brought the Goths.

This will be our next point.

CHAPTER II

THE ORIGIN OF ODIN AND HIS FOLLOWERS

THE particularist form of society had its origin among the emigrants from the fertile lands of the eastern slope of Scandinavia. The best land is found in the east of Jutland, the Danish islands, and the south of Sweden, which forms a kind of peninsula, so deeply do the lakes Wener and Wetter penetrate into it.

These emigrants were descended from farmers, as we have seen. They were the sons and daughters of stalwart Gothic peasants, a tribe of Germans who came out from the great steppes on the banks of the Caspian and the Black Sea, and passed gradually from the pastoral art to the cultivation of land, and from elementary cultivation to systematic cultivation. This change of occupation was gradually forced on them during their long migration across the plain of Lower Germany, where the steppe narrows gradually from the east westwards, until it ends in the fertile regions of Scandinavia. With the development of ability, which resulted from practising the art of agriculture, came certain changes in the constitution of the family. The number of intelligent and energetic children in the patriarchal community increased. They were impelled to break the bonds of the large family association, which weighed upon them, to substitute instead more limited groups, and to become their own masters with independent work. The freer and more active life of the new homes thus formed fostered a greater spirit of independence and enterprise in the children, and created the ability to satisfy it.

But the influence of a progressive system of agriculture was not the only cause of the development of the Gothic race.

The most famous and most living traditions of Scandinavia, which tell us of this agricultural prosperity, corroborated as

they are by all the historical, geographical, and social facts that we have just mentioned, are still better evidence of the existence of a civilisation which shows a very remarkable development in the industrial and intellectual arts, in the art of government and in town life, a civilisation which was grafted on to the rural civilisation of the Goths shortly before the Christian era. If any fact is marked indelibly on the memory of any people it is this. It is expressed at length with vigour and precision in the old songs of the country. They are never tired of repeating that all that had to do with the foundation of cities, with industrial arts, intellectual culture, and public authority in Scandinavia did not originate among the people themselves, was not an indigenous growth nor the outcome of their local development, but was an importation. The previous history of this imported culture is unknown, but all the legends bear witness that on a given day it suddenly made its appearance as if by a miracle. That explains why it was afterwards looked upon as such a striking event, and why it made such a profound and vivid impression upon a whole people who retained the memory of it through centuries of momentous crises.

In the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries, at a time when the country had been definitely converted to Christianity, and was breaking many of the bonds which bound it to its heathen past, some remarkable men from different parts of Scandinavia—among others, Sœmund Sigfusson, named the "Savant," an ecclesiastic of Iceland; Saxo Grammaticus, Provost of Röskilde, in Denmark; and Snorro Sturluson, member of the hereditary magistracy of Iceland—conceived the idea of collecting the old songs and stories of the north. They gave the significant names of "Edda," that is to say, "great-grandmother," and of "Saga," which means "something narrated," to most of their collections.

The antiquity of what forms the most constant element in these poems and stories cannot be questioned. It is well known from direct historical evidence that the authors and compilers took pains to preserve the national tradition, and the spirit that inspired them. They did not publish their work as something original nor as a discovery. Their idea was to record something that was known before their time among the people, which had already made a reputation and won fame, and which

had been handed down from time immemorial, and without doubt had its origin in primitive ages. The hand of Time in passing over these documents and memorials has, of course, imparted to them tints that can be easily recognised, but nothing has altered them materially. If this needed to be proved by internal evidence, taken from the work itself and traced out in its details, it could be done by Social Science. These records have, as a matter of fact, preserved innumerable features of a state of society which Social Science can accurately reconstruct, which is harmonious in all its parts, and belongs to a recognised genus and species, with peculiar modifications, which are in accordance with the unchanging laws of social transformations. In this case the procedure of verification is similar to that which enables us to recognise the existence of certain animal or vegetable species, no longer found to-day, by means of impressions left in the earth's strata. They actually did exist, because they can be scientifically reconstructed according to the permanent laws of zoology and botany. This method of verification can be applied to history, and is one of the finest achievements of Social Science. Hitherto historical criticism has remained in the same condition as that of criticism with regard to certain geological facts before anything was known of the science of paleontology. Before this science was developed, any impressions or remains of organisms that were discovered buried in rocks were carefully described in every detail, and the exact spot whence they were taken was accurately defined, but it was found not to be always possible to say whether they were "sports of Nature" or remains of organisms that had disappeared; and there was no method then known for accurately deducing from such fragmentary indications the complete form and conditions of life of the organism to which they belonged. In the same way historical criticism may actually rescue a document from the dust of Time, may neatly prune away from it all foreign elements, and determine with certainty its growth, its date, and its place of origin; but when it is a case of extracting from that document a knowledge of the social organisation to which it belongs, historical criticism is confronted by all the uncertainty and confusion arising from popular or personal notions of what society is. Historical criticism has failed to examine methodically the various forms

of modern society, nor has it subjected them to "comparative anatomy," nor discovered in them "the law of the correlation of the forms of their different parts," and it has not, therefore, been able to reconstruct in a scientific manner the organism of an ancient society, by piecing together its scattered features which are to be found preserved in documents. Social Science has furnished us with *the* complete and indispensable method which historical criticism lacked. We shall immediately proceed to apply it to the subject before us.

I cannot do better than choose from among the documents which tell of the invasion of an urban, industrial, intellectual, and political movement into Scandinavia, one which sums up this important fact in a few words, and I will quote it without destroying its original form. It is an extract from Snorro Sturluson's work, the *Ynglinga Saga*. J. J. Ampère says of it: "It can only have been formed into the poetic whole which Snorro has edited under the title of *Ynglinga Saga* after having been handed down through many generations and embodied in many heroic songs." I will proceed to quote it as an interesting piece of evidence of Scandinavian antiquity.

"The land which lies to the east of the Tanaïs (the Don) was called in old times Asaland, or even Asaheim—that is to say, the land or the home of the Ases; and the capital of the country bore the name of Asgard (dwelling-place of the Ases; the word 'gaard'—yard, ward, garden—is still used in Norwegian to mean a dwelling-place, composed of a group of buildings). A prince called Odin dwelt in this city. Now great sacrifices were performed there, and it was the custom that the twelve most powerful chiefs should attend to the sacrifices and administer justice to the people, whence it came about that they were called Diars or Drotners—that is to say, gods or lords—and that all the people paid them honour and obeyed them. Odin got the mastery over all the rest by making distant journeys and by knowing the science of war, for he had subjugated many countries and kingdoms. So fortunate was he in battle that he always returned victorious and laden with booty; and thus his comrades-in-arms were persuaded that victory belonged to him wherever he might chance to fight. When his men went to war or embarked on some enterprise it was their custom to ask him to give them a blessing by laying his hands upon

them, hoping in this way to be successful in all things. Furthermore, if any of them happened to be in danger by land or sea, they straightway called upon the name of Odin, believing, in all honesty, that he would help them as if he were beside them.

"On several occasions Odin visited such distant countries that it took him many years to accomplish his journeys. He had two brothers, Ve and Vitir. It was they who governed in his absence. On one occasion, when Odin had travelled to a very distant country and all hope of his return had been abandoned as his absence had been so prolonged, his brothers divided his inheritance and his kingdom, and both laid claim to the hand of Frigg, his wife. But soon after Odin returned and took back his wife.

"Odin led his army against the Vanes: but they were on their guard; they defended their country, and victory remained in the balance. The two people ravaged each other's lands and wrought much damage. Finally, weary of war on both sides, they held a solemn assembly, at which peace was concluded and hostages were exchanged.

"The Vanes gave Odin two of their most powerful men as hostages—Niord, the rich, and his son Frey. Odin set them apart to perform the sacrifices to the gods, and they were called gods among the Ases. Niord had a daughter named Freya, who was a priestess; she was also the first who taught the Ases the magic art called Seid, which was much practised among the Vanes. While Niord was living in the land of the Vanes he married his own sister, in accordance with their laws, and she bare him these two children, Frey and Freya. But among the Ases marriage was forbidden between people of such near relationship.

"On their side the Ases gave as hostages one of their men named Hæner, whom they thought was destined to become chief, so richly was he endowed with beauty and majesty, and also a dwarf called Mimir, the wisest of their people.

"No sooner had Hæner arrived in the country of the Vanes than they made him their chief; and Mimir helped him by giving counsel. But when Hæner held the assembly, in order to administer justice or transact any other business, and had to decide difficult questions in Mimir's absence, it was his custom to say, 'Let others decide this matter!' For this reason the

Vanes. thought that they had been duped in the exchange of hostages, so they seized Mimir, cut off his head, and sent it to the Aseb. Odin took the head, embalmed it, and by means of his enchantments caused it to talk with him and reveal many mysteries.

"From the point where the sun rises in summer (north-east) to that where it sets in winter (south-west) there stretches a long chain of very high mountains (the Oural Mountains), which divides the kingdom of Sweden (and its long route through the European steppe) from the other kingdoms (near which Odin lived in the east). Not far from these mountains to the southwards is the country of the Turks (Turkestan); Odin possessed a large extent of territory there (to the east of the Don, according to the above statement).

"About this time the Roman generals were scouring the earth, subjugating all the races to their laws, whence it came about that several chiefs abandoned their possessions (the conquest of the east by Sulla, Lucellus, and Pompey, from 85 to 64 B.C.). Now, as Odin was well versed in divination and in every kind of knowledge, he foresaw that his posterity should reign in the north. For this reason he left to his brothers Ve and Vitir the government of his city of Asgard, and went away with the rest of the gods and a large number of men. First he made his way across the kingdom of Gardarige, that lay towards the west (the Russian and German steppe), and then (when he reached the north-west extremity of the steppe) turned towards the south, to the Saxon plain (now Hanover and Westphalia). There Odin subdued many kingdoms and set his sons, of whom he had many, to defend the conquered land. Then he went north and took up his dwelling on the seashore, at a place which is known to-day as Odinsö, in the island of Fyen.

"Thence he sent Gefion farther north beyond the straits to search out new lands. On the way she went to see Gylfe, King of Sweden, who gave her a large tract of arable land. . . . Odin perceived that it was good land; he betook himself thither and concluded a treaty with the King, for the latter saw that he had but little power to withstand the Aseb. For Odin and Gylfe competed in sorceries and charms of every kind, and at every contest the Aseb were superior. Odin made his home on the banks of Lake Mälar, at a place which is called ancient

Sigtun (between Stockholm and Upsala), and there he raised a magnificent temple and founded sacrifices after the manner of the Ases. He became master of all the land round Sigtun, and granted estates and homes to all those appointed to perform sacrifices. Niord had his house at Noatun; Frey at Upsala; Heimdal at Himinberg; Thor at Thrudoorg; Balder at Breidablik; and Odin gave them all arable lands.

"Odin put into force in his country all the ancient laws of the Ases, in which it was decreed that the remains of the dead should be given to the flames, . . . that the ashes of the funeral pyre should be thrown into the sea, or covered with a mound of earth. Funeral barrows were to be raised in honour of chiefs and princes, so that posterity should not forget them. Monumental stones were to be set up in memory of valiant men who had distinguished themselves from the crowd by their exploits, and this custom was long preserved. . . .

"Throughout all Sweden the inhabitants paid Odin a piece of silver per head, in return for which he undertook to defend the country, repel the enemy, and watch over the sacrifices."

When I first examined this great tradition which I have here abridged for the reader, I paused at what is undoubtedly its most striking point, Odin's exodus, an event unparalleled in his history, the transplanting of his mighty household from the banks of the Don to the Baltic's northern shores. In this act, which is clearly the most prominent in the narrative, I recognised, above all, the brilliant action of a leader of men and a great captain.

However, I did not fail to notice that the expedition did not appear to the Goths like a conquest of arms. Odin did not attempt to subdue them by force, but to conciliate them by the superiority of the civilisation which he introduced among them. Accompanied as he was not by the whole people of Asaland or Asgard but only by his chief comrades and a picked band of men, he did not attempt to drive out the stout and prosperous farmers of Gothland, nor to dispossess them, but to enter into partnership with them and to make use of them, while at the same time he served them in his own way. Thus we see him directing his energy towards the development of *a military power*, the establishment of *industrial arts*, the encouragement of *intellectual culture*, the organisation of *religious functions*, all

of which he did by creating town centres. And as the Gothic people, although they were intelligent and progressive in other ways, lacked these arts and had nothing better of their own which would be displaced by them, it can easily be understood that they welcomed them with admiration and conceived of Odin as a miraculous being.

The *military character* of Odin is manifest everywhere. It is the most striking feature of his history. The end of the above narrative contains a clear statement of the system of taxation which provided him with the means necessary for the defence of the country. We shall read elsewhere with what intense enthusiasm his successors attacked and overthrew the German tribes in the great "invasion of the Barbarians."

The *part he played in introducing industrial arts*, which led to the creation of a class of artisans and merchants, is less marked in the passage quoted above than in the rest of the Sagas and in the Eddas. It is, however, so marked a characteristic of his work that his name is most frequently associated with it. For that reason, when people came to deify the hero and made him the supreme god of the Scandinavian Olympus, they did not identify him with Jupiter. That honour was reserved for his son Thor, whose work it was to hurl the thunderbolt. Nor, in spite of his skill as a leader in battle, was he identified with Mars. A god named Tiu was so identified. But Odin was identified with Mercury, the god of useful arts, of commerce, and of bargaining. And so, several centuries later, when the Saxons, those worshippers of Odin, translated into their own language the names that the Romans had given to the days of the week, they made *Jeudi* or Jupiter's day into Thor's day or Thursday; *Mardi* or Mars' day they turned into Tiu's day or Tuesday; while *Mercredi* or Mercury's day they changed into Odin's or Woden's day, *i.e.* Wednesday. This Tacitus had already observed. In writing of the Germans he said, "Mercury is the greatest of their gods. Human victims are offered up to him, but only animals to the others." And in another place: "When the conquerors have dedicated the hostile army to Mars and Mercury, men and horses and everything belonging to the conquered have to be put to death." [1]

That to Odin was attributed *the introduction of intellectual*

[1] *De Mor. German.*, 9; *Annales*, xiii. 57.

culture is unquestionably proved by the reputation so widely ascribed to him in Scandinavian books "of knowing the *runes*," that is to say, letters and the art of writing, and even of being their inventor. An illiterate people have a special reverence and admiration for the art of writing, as the means of preserving the formulæ of science and religion. Hence a knowledge of the runes comes to be considered as evidence of ability to understand the ways of learning and the mysteries of religion. The same idea was expressed in the Middle Ages by the phrase, "to be a clerk," which meant that a man was not only a member of the ecclesiastical body, but that he was learned, and at any rate knew how to read. It is worth while observing that Odin's wisdom appears most frequently under a form which marks the difference in character of the two civilisations, Gothic and Odinid. His wisdom works behind a veil of mysteries and wonders, and is displayed as the effect of magic power. That is the sort of fascination that an Oriental chief or priest would delight in exercising upon a simple people.

To turn to *the part Odin played in religion.* The system of worship which he introduced from the east, as we have already described, was certainly not long maintained: the reason of this will be explained later. The most definite result which the appearance of this extraordinary being produced upon the religion of the Scandinavians seems to have been to cause them to adopt hero-worship in a more decided form as a substitute for a more direct worship of divinity, which was at the same time more abstract and nearer to nature-worship. Through the influence of Odin's worship their religion seems, on the one hand, to have turned aside from the primary truth; and on the other, owing to the more positive and human form it assumed, to have acquired a more living influence upon their minds. Odin came to be worshipped with genuine enthusiasm by all the tribes of German origin, for his fame was not slow in reaching them, as we shall see.

Throughout his peaceful conquest of the Goths, Odin showed so much respect for their rights of ownership, that he did not set up his headquarters among them. Gothland must have been populous and fully cultivated at this time—as indeed all the facts go to prove—for Odin did not find enough unoccupied land there for a suitable home for himself and his followers.

We saw that, while he was engaged in founding Odense, he sent an expedition to the north beyond the borders of the Goths, beyond the land now known as Mälar Götaland, in search of new lands. There he built his house on the banks of Lake Mälar, at Sigtun; near the strait upon which Stockholm is now situated. He gave his companions pieces of land in the neighbourhood. Later on towns sprang up there, and among others the well-known town of Upsala.

He found a type of people in that country quite unlike the Goths. Everything goes to show that they were inferior to the Goths, but they lived at peace with them and considered them to be near relations. They were the *Suiones*, according to statements made by the Romans, and their name has survived in the ancient province of Swealand, which was their territory, and in Sweden, called Sueonia in the Middle Ages. The reason why the name of this inferior race has survived rather than that of the Goths, is that the centre which Odin chose has been recognised through all the ages as the most favourable place for the industrial organisation of the country. The mineral wealth of the country, still indicated by the reputation enjoyed by Dannemora iron, is concentrated there. A glance at a geographical map of the products of Sweden will show the superiority of the position.[1] We cannot help recognising in Odin that genius for founding cities which history ascribes to him when we see him arrive in Sweden and without hesitation mark out the site of the city which was to be the Queen of the great Scandinavian peninsula. He seems to have been the Peter the Great of that remote period.

To what circumstance was due the original distinction between the Goths and the Suiones, the primitive Swedes? How did they come there? The idea is that they did not follow the route *viâ* the great Germanic plain like the Goths, but that they went round the Baltic and the Gulf of Finland by the east and entered Scandinavia by the Archipelago of Aland, which is situated opposite the country where Odin found them. Now the journey across the forest regions of Central Russia would have had the same deteriorating influence upon the Suiones as it had upon the Fins, the ancient Finlanders, who came by that very road: they were totally unlike the Fins.

[1] See *Atlas*, Vidal-Lablache, map 104, figs. 1 and 2.

On the contrary, they had so many characteristics in common with the Goths that it is difficult to believe that they could ever have been far separated from them. I am inclined to think that they travelled in the van of the Goths, and so travelled farther north, where the soil, as we have seen, was just as good as in the southern regions. If they were less clever at agriculture than the Goths, it was undoubtedly due to the fact that as they led the way in winning Scandinavia from the Fins, and continually had to defend their northern frontier against that race of hunters whom they were pressing back into the extreme north, they were obliged to devote more time to the art of war. Hence it came about that their fusion with Odin's warlike followers was more complete, and this has led some critics to think that they were the people Odin brought with him.

As the home he had chosen was in their midst, he had every opportunity for exercising his military skill, and indeed was obliged to do so. He had to wage war incessantly against the Fins. The Eddas and Sagas are full of stories of the great struggle. It was a constant source of annoyance to the Ases, as they could not bring it to an end, nor enjoy their new possessions in peace as they had done formerly in happy Asaland. This is the reverse side of Odin's brilliant epic. This restless tribe of hunters, fishers, and pillagers harassed him continually. They could never be caught, and could be used only as slaves, as they were scarcely capable of serving as labourers. National tradition has avenged the great Scandinavian god's bad fortune by making all the evil gods into Finnish gods or representing them as dwelling among the Fins. Tradition paints them with the characteristics and manners of those small, ugly beings, with all their cunning and their quarrelsome nature, and pictures them as uttering threats from their haunts at the bottom of fiords, in the heart of the woods, and behind the ice of mountain peaks, whence they rush out like wolves and sea-serpents, and to which they scamper back with all speed to hide themselves, mocking at their enemies, when they have cunningly accomplished their evil deeds.

In the Edda there is a most singular song, the Song of Rig, which gives a sort of summary in a most picturesque form of the different types and relationships of the three civilisations,

Finnish, Gothic, and Odinic. I cannot resist quoting it in an abridged form.

Heimdal, one of the gods of the Ases, travelling under the name of Rig, reached a certain country by the seashore. He there came upon three dwellings, one after the other, each of which was inhabited by a man and wife, to whom a son was born after his visit. The couple that occupied the first house bore the name of Great-grandfather and Great-grandmother (they were Fins). They regaled their guest with coarse bread and a hunk of veal. When a son was born to them they called him Slave (Throell): "He was black, the skin on his hands was rough, his knees were bent, his fingers thick, his face ugly, his back rounded, and his nails long. When he grew strong, he spent his time in barking trees and gathering bundles of sticks to carry to the house. A wayfaring woman came to the place: the soles of her feet were torn and bleeding, her arms burnt by the sun, and her nose flattened down. Her name was Servant." These two miserable beings were united, and from their union sprang the race of slaves. The names of their sons and daughters were significant; they were opprobrious names: the Gloomy One, the Coarse Man, the Quarreller, the Idler, the Blockhead; and of women: the Slow One, the Slut, etc.; their duties were "to make hedges, spread manure on the fields, look after the pigs, watch the goats, and dig out peat."

Rig came to the second house. His new hosts were called Grandfather and Grandmother (they were Goths). "The husband was constructing a loom; his beard was well kempt; his hair was arranged in a tuft on his forehead; his dress was neat. A chest adorned the room. The wife was turning the spinning-wheel; she was mending some clothes." She bore a son, who was named Peasant (Karl). "He was wrapped in linen. His hair was reddish, his complexion highly coloured, his eyes brilliant. He began to grow and gather strength; he learned to tame bulls, to make ploughs, to build houses of wood, to make barns, to construct chariots, and to plough. He took to himself a wife. She was clothed in goatskin and carried a bunch of keys. Her name was 'Diligence.' Their children were called Man, Boy, Farmer, Artisan, Subject, etc.; from them sprang the race of peasants."

Rig went to the third house. It was situated so as to face

the south. The couple who lived in it were called Father and Mother (they were Odin's descendants). "The husband, who was seated, was stretching the cord for a bow; he was bending the wood for it, and was fashioning arrows. His wife was weaving some cloth of thread. Her complexion was whiter than snow, and her eyebrows were most beautiful. Rig sat down to partake of their meal. She spread a cloth of embroidered linen on the table. She took some light rolls, and some pure cheeses, and put them on the cloth. She then brought some dishes, ornamented with silver and full of venison, bacon, and roast birds, and set them on the table. The wine was in tankards, and the goblets were mounted with silver. They talked and conversed till daylight faded." When their son was born he was wrapped in silk and sprinkled with lustral water. They called him Noble (Jarl): "His hair was fair, his cheeks rosy, his eyes as bright as those of a small snake." He grew up in the house; he learned to wield the lance, to fashion bows and arrows, to hurl darts, to draw the sword, to swim, to ride horses, to hunt with hounds. The traveller, Rig, taught him the runes, and intended him to become the owner of hereditary lands, of noble estates and ancient houses. The young warrior galloped by mountain and valley, put the people to the sword, and conquered the country. He was sole ruler of eighteen "gaards"—eighteen settlements. He divided his riches, giving rings and fragments of gold bracelets to some, and fleet horses to others. He wedded the daughter of the Baron (Herser), and their children were called Son, Heir, Scion, Descendant. "They pursued the same occupations as their father, they tamed horses, made curved shields, sharpened javelins, wielded the lance." A brother was born, who was called Chief—King (Konr). "He spent his time in learning the runes—the runes of time, the runes of eternity. He understood the songs of birds. He knew how to save men's lives, to turn the edge of swords, to calm the sea, to quench fire, to assuage and quiet pain. He had the strength of eight men."

It would be impossible in a rapid sketch, drawn from life, to give a better picture of a state of society long since passed away. The above sketch serves far better than many long descriptions to make the reader grasp the three social and physical types—the Fins, the Goths, and the descendants of

Odin, to which the author, a faithful historian, has given the names of Great-grandfather, Grandfather, and Father, to show in what order of time they reached Scandinavia.

The researches we have just made, summary though they are, have given us a very clear idea of the salient features of Odin's character as he appeared after he had settled among the Goths and become a regular part of their world. The authenticity of these characteristics is established in the first place by their mutual harmony; in the second, by their agreement with the facts supplied by history, with the investigations of criticism, and with the demands of Social Science—that is to say, with the conditions necessary for the normal explanation of the alleged social facts.

But the honour of having accomplished a more difficult piece of work rests entirely with M. Philippe Champault. He has made researches into the social conditions which produced Odin, and in which he lived *before he moved into Scandinavia.* His work is of intense interest for the reason that his researches go back to the sources of that civilisation which Odin introduced among the Goths.

The reader should not fail to peruse M. Champault's work on this subject in *La Science Sociale*, under the title of "Le personnage d'Odin et les Caravaniers iraniens en Germanie."[1] But I cannot resist mentioning some of its most valuable suggestions, in order to shed a clearer light on what we already know about Odin, and to show the original conditions of which he was the product, in the same way as we have already shown what he originated.

After employing all the resources of erudition and of Social Science to obtain as complete an idea as possible of this extraordinary personage, M. Champault recognised in the hero's whole way of life and manner of acting the characteristics and methods of organisation peculiar to the great caravan leaders, who used the roads through the steppes to carry on trade with very remote places. He found that the great Germanic plain, which had been traversed by slowly moving migratory tribes, who never retraced their steps, was also used periodically by vigorous chieftains and powerful social organisations, of which Odin and his following of Ases were only eminent types, as a

[1] *La Science Sociale*, vol. xvii. p. 398 ff. and vol. xviii. p. 25 ff.

thoroughfare by means of which they were able to carry out commercial enterprises with despatch.

This fact, though hitherto ignored, connected as it is with the history of this Europe of ours in the latter part of the ancient era, rivets our attention upon the activity of a very striking piece of social mechanism, of which but little notice has been taken: I mean the commerce that was carried on in ancient times between extraordinarily remote places in the face of enormous difficulties.

A study of the classics gives but a small idea of commerce in ancient times. A study of modern literature would give hardly a better knowledge of the great industrial and commercial phenomena, which are nevertheless the most determining cause of our systems of society, and of the movements by which they are swayed. But Social Science recognises that the part played by commerce between remote places in all the epochs of the world is of the greatest importance. By the aid of Social Science we can study races which certain complex circumstances of place have kept till now in the primitive conditions of early civilisation; and from the knowledge gained by a study of these races, who may still be observed, we can form an adequate idea of similar races that have disappeared. Through Social Science it has been discovered that these now antiquated societies, which, like so many ancient societies, seem isolated and impenetrable, have from time immemorial had commercial intercourse with remote countries which till comparatively modern times remained almost unknown except in fables.

The largest, the strongest, and the most ancient of the primitive organisations of commerce between remote places which have been brought to our cognisance by examples still extant, is without doubt that of the caravan leaders of the great steppes. It is to this type that Odin belonged. A description of one of the finest extant specimens of this kind of organisation can be read in *La Science Sociale*. It deals with the powerful sect of Senussiyeh, which extends over more than half the steppes or deserts of Northern Africa, and was founded in the first half of this century by an inhabitant of Mostaghanem, Seyyid Es-Senussi, a modern Odin; this sect received as members nearly all the partisans of the notorious

Madhi of Khartum.[1] An ancient model of the same form of society is furnished by the brotherhood or celebrated college of the Priests of Ammon, who lived at Thebes and in the great Lybian oasis, and were the original founders of Egyptian power. M. de Préville has published a learned and most enlightening article on this subject in *La Science Sociale*.[2] Thanks to M. Champault, we shall now be able to place the brotherhood of the Ases, with Odin as their chief, in the same category. I refer the reader to the author for all the documents upon which his history is based. I will limit myself to his main conclusions, which he has deduced with such accuracy, that, once indicated as they have been, they will find ample proof in what we already know about Odin.

Asgard, the centre of Odin's activity, must have been situated near the place where the lower Don most nearly approaches the lower basin of the Volga. The place is marked by the modern towns of Kalatch and Tzaritzyn, the former on the Don, the latter on the Volga. "To the east of the Don," according to the indication in the *Ynglinga Saga*, there is a place just suited for a town that is in contact with the plains of Turkestan, which the same document describes as stretching to the south of the Urals. The vine cannot be cultivated farther north than this point, a fact of importance, since the Eddas represent the Ases as using wine. A glance at a physical map of Russia will reveal unmistakably the "Salt Steppe" to the south of the Urals opposite Asgard, and the vines which cover the land round the supposed site of the city.[3]

It would be impossible to place Asgard farther north, because it would not then come under the conditions defined by tradition; *nor farther south*, in the plain lower down the river Don, because that is a region of unbroken steppe where towns do not flourish now any more than they did in bygone ages. A piece of regularly watered land, suitable for agriculture and for fruit-bearing trees, is indispensable for a stationary tribe settled among nomads. In such a place, where food and shelter can be obtained in a well-cultivated and well-planted country, houses

[1] *La Science Sociale*, vol. ix. p. 383 ff.; *Le mouvement madhiste et sa nouvelle évolution*, by M. Paul Danzanvilliers.

[2] Vol. ix. p. 549 ff.: *L'Egypte ancienne; la colonisation de la vallée du Nil.*

[3] See *Atlas*, Vidal-Lablache, maps 83 and 114, fig. 1.

are sure to spring up in all directions. This is exactly the kind of place we have indicated as the site of Asgard. All the oases, whether in the centre of the steppes or on their confines, have similar features. Burnaby's description of Khiva (*A Ride to Khiva*) is much the same, and gives some idea of the ancient cities of the land of Turkestan, which extended as far as the lower basin of the Don in ancient days, when it was damper and more thickly covered with grass.

It would be still less admissible to place Asgard on the shore of the Sea of Azoff, or of the Black Sea, because all the characteristics of the Odinid civilisation show that its inhabitants had not come under the influence of the Greek colonies which were spread along those coasts. Without taking into account the impassable bogs of the Palus Mæotis, the steppe which stretched to the north of those colonies was not a suitable place for the activity of the Greeks. It was a region that receded far inland, where their influence never penetrated, and which formed a barrier they never really crossed. Asgard must therefore be placed beyond that steppe.

A very important piece of evidence comes to support these considerations. At the very place we have indicated known now as the Province of the Don, where the river makes a great bend towards the Volga, Herodotus describes a group of Scythians whom he distinguishes from all the others who, as nomads or husbandmen, then peopled the southern plain of Russia, by the title of "Royal" :[1] "They look upon the others," he says, "as their slaves."[2] It cannot be denied that the epithet of "Royal" corresponds very well with what the Scandinavian story-teller says of the Ases : "They were called Lords, and all the people paid them honour and showed them obedience." As to the name of Scythians, far from being an obstacle to the identification of the Royal Scythians with the followers of Odin, it is of assistance, for we now know that it is only a variation of the name of Goths : Goths, Getæ, Jutes, Scythians are different pronunciations, and the connection between them can be easily seen. These Scythian followers of Odin therefore, even when they were in the east, would have borne the same name as the Goths only with a variation, and the Goths would

[1] See *Atlas*, Vidal-Lablache, maps 4 and 5.

[2] Herodotus, *History*, iv. 20, 22, and 7 *in fine*.

merely have kept, under the appropriate form, the true generic name of all the tribes to which the Romans conceived the idea of giving the name of Germans.

But what is far more interesting here is the relationship which the names, and everything else, reveal between the Goths and the followers of Odin. In the Song of Rig it is clearly indicated by the physiological types, the Grandfather and the Father—that is to say, the Goth and the follower of Odin bear so close a resemblance to one another that they seem to be distinguished rather by a difference in education—rustic in the one case, aristocratic in the other—than by a difference of birth. And their resemblance is heightened still more by the contrast between them and the Great-grandfather, the Fin. The relationship between the Goths and the followers of Odin is similarly helpful in explaining how it was that a fusion took place so easily between two races whose social characters were so divergent: the one, that of the Goths, being simple and natural, moulded by the north, by country life and liberty; the other, that of the followers of Odin, being ostentatious and complex, moulded by the east, by the civilisation of towns, and by the habit of domination. Thus little by little do we find an explanation for everything in this wonderful story.

Among the races that we mentioned just now—the Goths, the Jutes, the Germans, the Getæ, the Scythians—we must not omit the Massagetes, the Thyssagetes, and the Bastarnes, who are from the same stock and belong to the German family. The Massagetes inhabited the land to the east of the Aral Sea, and the Thyssagetes that to the north of the Caspian. The Bastarnes dwelt between the Carpathians and the marshes of the Pripet in the passage leading from the Russian steppe to the steppe of Lower Germany. In this way the mighty German race spread across the ancient world in a splendid sweep from the last slopes of Pamir to the borders of the regions of perpetual ice, and formed an unbroken link between the Massagetes and Thyssagetes of the Aralo-Caspian basin, and the Scythians and Bastarnes of the basin of the Black Sea, and the Germans and Goths of the basin of the Baltic.[1]

These powerful races remained absolutely outside the influence of Greek and Roman civilisation until the first

[1] See *Atlas*, Vidal-Lablache, maps 4, 5 and 16, 17.

centuries of our era. The Greeks, as I said, were checked by the steppe. As for the Romans, they halted in front of the Hercynian Forest, which stretched from the Harz, a mountain range in Hanover, where its name survives, as far as the eastern extremity of the Carpathians, covering with its gloomy shade all the hills of Central Germany. Greece and Rome had gradually exercised an influence upon three races—the Pelasgic, Barbarian, and Celtic—which had followed the three parallel routes of the Mediterranean, the northern coast of Africa, and the valley of the Danube with its prolongation into the western slope of Gaul. But the entire Germanic race, though it was a near neighbour of those masters of the world along its most extensive frontier, nevertheless escaped their influence owing to the intervening barrier formed by steppe and forest. And the great man who brought them civilisation was Odin.

The situation of the city of Asgard reveals the source from which that civilisation was drawn. Odin's town, so well placed on the Germans' high road, had before it in a straight line to the south the central door of the Oriental world, the Pass of Dariel in the Caucasus. On the other side of that door lay the glittering countries of Asia Minor, Mesopotamia, and Persia.

It was a masterly position. To right and left of the city, stretching away to an extraordinary distance, lay the open, uniform route of the steppes, inhabited by a people unvisited by traders, who would be the exclusive customers of the townspeople, and who were of their own race. In front lay a magnificent stretch of igneous land, excellent for vegetation of every kind and full of opportunities for the engineer, favourable for social development and for the production of wealth of all kinds. The idea of carrying the produce of the one country to the other was one of the highest order from the commercial point of view.

Moreover, the above conjecture as to the situation of Asgard, the source of the civilisation which Odin made it his interest to propagate, is further corroborated by the fact that Scandinavian art and thought in every branch show the influence of Oriental forms and of forms peculiar to that part of the east represented by Western Asia. No one can deny it. Archæology and literature acknowledge and assert it. The runic alphabet is neither Greek nor Roman, but was brought by the Greeks,

Romans, and Celts, from the east, and modified for their own use. The story of the *Ynglinga Saga* is full of accounts of commercial enterprises carried on by Odin in order to secure Oriental products. One of his longest journeys was to the Persian Gulf. He tried to conquer the people dwelling in the neighbourhood of Lake Van in Armenia—the Vanes. He seems to have acquired some lands on their frontier, and they were incessantly ravaging each other's territory. What could he have gained by this? The neighbourhood was rich in iron mines. The Chalybes, the foremost blacksmiths of the world, lived there. Did not we see that at the termination of the war the Ases had to give up Mimir as a hostage, whose head even after death taught Odin many things? Scandinavian tradition represents the cunning Mimir as armed with an ever-swinging hammer, and, like the Cyclops, adorned with a single bright eye in the middle of his forehead, representing in a picturesque manner the miner's lamp. It is very difficult not to believe that Odin had the working of certain mines in these regions under his control, and that he combined the professions of caravan leader and director of ironworks, especially when we observe that the use of iron in Scandinavia coincides with his arrival in that country and that the mineral wealth of a district of Sweden determined his choice of land there.

Clearly as every point in the situation of the town helps to prove that it was a place of commerce, still more clearly does the character of its inhabitants support this view.

Permanent settlements of sedentary tribes in the midst of nomads infallibly become resting-places. They form centres where travellers may replenish their food supplies and find rest and safety. Hence the more capable inhabitants find not only the means of enriching themselves by trading and hospitality, but also opportunities of forming a business connection and acquiring influence among all those who pass to and fro over the steppe.

There soon springs up among them the idea of enlarging their nucleus of power by extending the benefit of security beyond the town, into the desert. Their first care is to form a union, so that their spheres of influence may not clash, a thing which would ruin the enterprise at its very beginning. Their next step is to try and establish a system of brotherhoods

and of exchange of pledges among the groups of nomads who are their customers. They find a bond in the religious brotherhood. With this as a solid foundation, they form an association in the common interest between themselves and their customers and among their customers, the object of which is to guarantee the safety of themselves against one another throughout the steppe, and the safety of all the members of the corporation against every assailant. This kind of association has sprung up spontaneously in all ages in countries where there are steppes, from the time of the priests of the oases of Ammon and of Thebes to that of the modern Khouans Senussiyehs of the Sahara and the Soudan, and from the Etruscan Lucumons, in all probability, to the Lamas of Tartary. It represents the whole of Odin's religious organisation, with its twelve brother priests and that magic benediction which he gave to those setting out on an expedition, who believed that, wherever they might be, they were assured of his protection as much as if he were beside them. In this way we come to understand the figure that Odin presents as a patriarch of venerable mien who affords protection more by his strength of character, his authority, and his religious activity, than by his arms.

As, however, on occasions this corporate body, this protectorate, needs a material sanction, some visible form of power upon which it can fall back, arms are, after all, of sovereign importance and their power is centralised, as is the case in every army, in the hands of a single leader, who is, of course, Odin. Odin is priest and warrior; the Ases, his companions, hardly appear at all except as priests.

But it is not enough to consider Asgard as a military centre as well as a commercial and religious one. We must also picture to ourselves that here and there in the steppe were stations which, after the model of the centre, had a triple character—military, religious, and commercial. These permanent stations, that served for defence and as points for concentration as well as for halting-places, were indispensable to the regular working of the great association and for the protection of the interests of nomad life. We see Odin occupied in setting them up in all directions in "his journeys"; he placed one or other of his sons in them "for the protection of the country." He was still occupied with this

work, according to the *Ynglinga Saga*, in his last journey into Germany, when he succeeded in pushing forward as far as Saxony to establish a station. In M. Champault's article there is an interesting list of stations, which appear from their ancient geographic names to have been connected with the Ases—as, for example, Azagarion near Kieff, Azcaucalis on the Vistula, etc.[1]

While Odin was perpetually on the move owing to his military duties, his brothers and the Ases remained at Asgard or in Asaland. It is clear, too, that Odin's wife Frigg played an important part in his absence. When he was believed to have perished in an expedition she was eagerly sought in marriage by those aspiring to succeed him, for the sake of material advantages. For in the system of society we have just described, the caravan leader's personal property was intrusted to the care of the wife, and remained in the possession of her and her family on her husband's death. That this was the case is proved beyond a doubt by the fact that among certain races of this type, for example among the Armenians of Van, according to the *Ynglinga Saga*, the brothers used to marry their sisters when they became widows in order to get the property thus left to them. This fact is also another proof of the existence of a system of caravan traffic in Odin's time.

Another fact which shows the position which women occupied in this state of society is the existence of the Walkyries, those armed daughters of the goddesses, wives of the Ases, who brought aid in battle, and, if necessary, bore the brunt of it themselves. This followed naturally from the fact that they had to be on guard with their mothers, when the men were too few for the defence. In races in which the men were periodically away on expeditions, owing to the exigencies of caravan life, the women were usually trained to be warriors like the Amazons of history.

The above proofs of the various characters in which Odin played his part add peculiar weight to the reasons for identifying him with Mercury, and, on the other hand, this identification determines beyond a doubt the meaning and dominant character of the facts we have just observed. We are dealing with a real "merchant." Odin is not only the god of com-

[1] *La Science Sociale*, vol. xviii. 41.

merce, because he is the father of industrial arts and of handicraftsmen, but he practises commerce himself, and on such a vast scale that he trades all over the world, and Mercury is obliged to put wings to his feet. And poetry has endowed him with a horse with eight legs.

However much the noise of the expedition which transplanted Odin from one end of the domain of the German race to the other echoed in the land, and however swiftly the fame and worship of the hero may have spread among the people, yet the authenticated statement that, from the time of Tacitus, Odin, the Mercury of the Germans, was known to be their great god, naturally makes us think that "the notion" of Odin, "the idea" of what his character represents, "the deeds" which make him live, must date far back in the minds and in the lives of those races. Odin must have had predecessors who foreshadowed his fame, his apotheosis, his elevation above the ancient gods. His was, in all probability, a personality that was already known before the man appeared who gave it a finished expression and in whom it became a living reality. Odin the Great must have been to other Odins what the Great King was to our other French kings—*i.e.* the highest expression of kingship, when that institution had reached its most complete form. Odin, the Odin we have studied, is certainly an historical individuality, but the name which is connected with his fame is that of a function, like the names of Pharaoh and Tzar. His own personal name is Sigge. According to Scandinavian literature, Odin or Woden means "travelling, walking"; the word is composed of the Indo-European roots "od" and "oad," and of some termination corresponding to our participles "ant, ing, ens." It is not very difficult, I think, to recognise Odin under this title of "traveller," since we use the same term to denote those who, among us sedentary people, are still representatives of nomad life in commerce: *si parva licet componere magnis?* Scandinavian mythologies agree in admitting that there were several Odins. M. Champault has dealt with this point in his work entitled, "Prédécesseurs d'Odin."[1] I will limit myself to quoting, as he does, the evidence of Herodotus, who even at that time mentions traffickers among the Royal Scythians who made such long

[1] *La Science Sociale*, vol. xvii. p. 411.

journeys that they were obliged to use seven languages if they went in certain directions.[1]

There is one final consideration which confirms all the evidence showing that Odin was a great caravan leader. It is this: that the fact that he was a caravan leader gives a clear explanation of his extraordinary exodus into Scandinavia. For although an Oriental prince in the face of a Roman invasion would naturally have thought of transporting his treasure, his servants, and his court far from the eagle's clutches, and would have attempted to gather to himself a new people in a remote land, yet Odin's removal to the farthest extremity of Europe, which was carried out with so much resolution, and his subsequent settlement, which was accomplished with comparative ease, would remain somewhat of a problem, if it were not remembered that he simply transferred the seat of his commerce from one end of the line to the other. Moreover, the motives for the migration assume great weight when we remember that Nearer Asia, one of the two poles of Odin's commerce, to which the commercial station of Asgard owed its origin, was confiscated after the Roman conquest for the advantage of Roman commerce. The reader should look at a map showing the progress of Roman arms in the east shortly before the Christian era, in order to see how very closely the place where Asgard stood was being surrounded and hemmed in at that time.[2]

It was in the early part of the first century B.C. that Roman power began to extend to the east. And it was at that epoch—and the coincidence is significant—that there appeared in Scandinavia certain signs of a new civilisation: among others, the use of iron, which superseded bronze, and the cremation of the dead, which went on side by side with ordinary burial—two facts for which no local cause can account and which Odin's arrival entirely explains.

We can no longer question the authenticity of the tales repeated by Scandinavian tradition when we see that in a story which pays as little attention to making its events probable or capable of proof as the *Ynglinga Saga*, tradition agrees in all points with the data of history and the facts drawn from the observation of social phenomena. The places, the conditions of

[1] Herodotus, *Hist.* iv. 24.

[2] See *Atlas*, Vidal-Lablache, maps 16 and 17.

life, the need for social organisation, the dates, everything combines to prove their truth, and the more we seek for the reasons of things, the more we find them in the alleged facts.

Moreover, it all holds together. When Odin was cut off from commerce with the east, he fell back altogether upon his occupations of metal-working and warfare. Therefore the two characters of smith and warrior are those by which he is best known in Scandinavia and upon which local tradition has laid most stress. It is clear that local tradition looks upon Odin as a creator of industries and a lover of war. That he was a caravan leader appears only from the facts of his earlier life, which have been faithfully handed down, and from his well-deserved title of the "Mercury" of the Germans.

Here again is an example of the precision with which social laws operate. Among Odin's institutions, those that were created by the commercial necessities of Asgard had but a short life in Scandinavia. The functions of the twelve great gods of the Ases, the heads of the great brotherhood of the steppe, had no historical development. When men could no longer make profits by commerce, for which peace is essential, they had to rely on the profits of war. The boldest, most vigorous lived the most securely, and cared little for peace or for brotherhoods. Each of those who are called the heirs of the "Father" in the Song of Rig, and whom I shall more simply call the Odinids, created a separate position for himself, which the song describes to perfection. By the Odinids are meant the descendants of Odin's comrades or those who adopted their way of life. Battle was the order of the day. There was no thought of anything but conquest. And the Song of Rig sounds like a patriotic song, and like the shout of a social revolution, when we read its final words, "The King, Konr, was studying the runes for his use and profit, when his quiet was disturbed by a crow. It told him he had better mount a horse and make armies roll in the dust. It told him of Dan and of Danpr, who were good warriors and clever sailors, and owned better lands than his!" With his dying breath Odin earnestly exhorted his followers to reconquer the east. This was the very last utterance of the dispossessed caravan leader!

His wish was accomplished. We shall see the Odinids, before two centuries have elapsed (170 A.D.), begin to extend

the empire of the Goths from the base of the Baltic to the banks of the Don, and there divide to the right and to the left of the Dnieper into Visigoths and Ostrogoths, Western and Eastern Goths. The torrent of the Huns hurled them back towards the west, upon Greece and Italy. They forgot Asgard and brilliant Asia altogether, and Rome became the object of their expeditions, for which they enlisted first the Goths and then all the tribes of the German and Saxon plains in turn, from the Vandals in the east to the Saxons and Franks in the west. They were the great promoters of the Barbarian invasion.

Thus it was Odin—the Odin who had been so long enshrined in the legends of the north, that caravan leader who fled before the blows that Pompey aimed at Mithridates—it was he who, in the person of his descendants, accomplished the vast and terrible plan which the hatred of the potentate of Asia Minor had conceived for the destruction of Rome.

Our gratitude is due to Social Science for having rescued Odin from the misty dreamland of mythology and restored him to history. He has taken his place there; he will never leave it.

We shall soon see the great events we have just mentioned unfold before the natural force of social laws. And when the great shocks which broke up the ancient world subside and give place to a new order of things, we shall be able to state with certainty that those who established it were not the fine Gothic peasants, nor Odin's powerful warriors, but that race of unobtrusive Gothic emigrants whose social development we have been studying. But, at the same time, what did they owe to Odin? We are now sure of the answer—

1. By developing industrial arts and intellectual culture among the Goths, the Odinid invasion produced two results: it made the emigrants more capable, and it made them more numerous. For emigration goes on more rapidly, and affects larger numbers among families with patriarchal traditions, the more the capacities of each individual are developed.

2. By supplying the Goths with chiefs for their expeditions, the Odinid invasion provided the emigrants with leaders when they became too numerous in their new territory. These chiefs were at once useful and troublesome to the emigrants; they were peculiarly useful to them in leading them to the conquest

of Western Europe, but they became troublesome when they conceived the idea of ruling them in the conquered lands, and of adopting to this end the remains of the shattered Roman institutions.

Now that we have seen what the emigrants inherited at their birth and what elements they brought from the eastern slope of Scandinavia, we must see what the peculiar type of country that they found on the western slope contributed towards their development.

CHAPTER III

THE SEACOAST FISHERMEN OF NORWAY

HISTORY reveals certain well-defined circumstances in the world's progress which have caused a decided change in its direction, and which are called the "decisive factors of history."

Sometimes the causes which operate at those points belong to an order of things which can be perceived only by the mind; at others, and more frequently, they are material and tangible.

When a journey by boat south-westwards along the Norwegian shore brings us round the gradual turn of the coast to the end of the Stavanger Fiord, formed by the last buttresses of the magnificent Lang-Field Mountains, and when we graze the immense, almost vertical cliffs, we can say, in proper terms and in a very literal sense, that we see with our eyes and touch with our hands one of the most extraordinary "decisive factors of history." By making the journey along that very coast, from the eastern slope of the great western chain of Scandinavian mountains to the western, the Gothic emigrants brought about the greatest change that the world has witnessed in the natural development of society, the transformation of the patriarchal into the particularist family.

The western slope of Scandinavia, from the point I have just mentioned to the plateau of Trondhjem, and from the north of the plateau of Trondhjem to the extreme north of the slope, presents an absolutely unique physical formation. It is not surprising that something should have happened there which happened nowhere else. From our knowledge of the past, and from all we know of the things within the world's compass, we can deduce the two following points: On the one hand, the Gothic emigration produced the particularist form of society there, and there only; and on the other, among all

the races of the particularist type which spread at the present day as far as the Antipodes, there is not a single one which does not trace its remote ancestors to the western slope of Scandinavia. This is an important fact, the knowledge of which is due solely to Social Science. It was first surmised and pointed out by Le Play. Later on I was able to investigate it; and it has been verified as a fact. I will summarise it here.

But before beginning the analysis of the phenomenon it will be a good thing to give a rough notion and a preliminary view, as it were, of the two elements which form its basis. Western Scandinavia is unique owing to the two following circumstances :—

1. The richest part of the great submarine plateau of Western Europe borders on the coast of Norway, from Stavanger as far as the other side of North Cape—that is to say, that near its coast and parallel with it there stretches an elevated plain under water, a broad band which, if it emerged, would increase Norwegian territory by half, without changing its form. It is as if Norway were doubled beneath the water ; as if there were a second Norway beside the first, but flat and submerged. The name " Norwegian submarine terrace " gives a good idea of the configuration of the region in question. At no point in the platform is there any break worth mentioning. At one place (to the north-west of Cape Stad, where the North Sea and the Atlantic join) it is so absolutely smooth for a distance of seventy-five miles, that if it were to rise above water, a railway track with a gradient not exceeding ·06 inches per foot could be laid upon it.

This Norwegian submarine terrace is at a depth of only 54 to 82 fathoms beneath the sea's surface. To the west and north it rises above the steep slopes of the Atlantic and the Arctic Ocean, which descend to depths of 546 and 1913 fathoms. On the south, beyond the place where the sea narrows between the two nearest capes of Norway and Scotland, it is, on the contrary, dominated by a higher terrace, by a more steeply inclined plane, which is only 49 to 13 fathoms below the surface. These are its definite boundaries.

As I have said, it forms part, or, rather, is an annex of the great submarine, semicircular plateau which serves as a buttress to Western Europe. This plateau appears in the angle of

the Bay of Biscay, juts out from the west coast of France for a distance varying from 24 to 62 miles, forms the bottom of the whole of the English Channel, envelops the British Isles with a broad band, as it does France, and stretches under the North Sea and the whole of the Baltic.[1]

But the point that chiefly distinguishes the Norwegian terrace from the rest of the plateau is the unrivalled abundance of fish that frequent it. In the aquatic world it is a "station" of the first order. Its superiority is due to the fact that the main current of warm sea-water, known as the Gulf Stream, passes over its whole length. This fact has exercised so considerable an influence upon the social constitution of Norway that it is important to know something about it. Besides, it is one of the most patent examples of the vast scale on which natural conditions are ordered so as to call forth man's activity and hedge it round.

The Gulf Stream is one of the supreme agents in the organisation of the northern world, and it has its origin in the region of the Equator. When I think how it comes across the path of our emigrants on the Norwegian coast, and what an influence it has upon them, I cannot help making a comparison between the magnificent movement of the ocean currents which come up from the south and the far-off west, and this great current of Germanic tribes which flows in an opposite direction from the south-east; and when I embrace in one glance these two absolutely different forces, whose combined action has produced so wonderful a result, I am struck by the large proportions of the spectacle which Social Science, like all the sciences, often suddenly discloses to the mind after having made it pass through the tiny avenues of minute observation.

The Gulf Stream is formed in the Atlantic on both sides of the equatorial line by the action of the trade-winds which are constantly blowing from Africa and drive an enormous volume of water that has long been heated by the tropical sun nearer and nearer to the northern coast of Brazil towards Guiana into the Caribbean Sea, and then into the Gulf of Mexico. After entering the gulf from the south by the Yucatan Channel, the mighty current makes a circuit there surrounded by land,

[1] See *Atlas manuel*, Hachette, map 8. See the hypsometric maps of Europe and France; Schrader's *Atlas*, maps 7 and 11.

and its temperature continues to rise above the average temperature of the ocean. It flows out on the east through the straits of Florida, passes round the peninsula, and travels parallel to the coast of North America. There the sudden outward curve of the continent throws it back across the Atlantic in a north-easterly direction to Ireland, Scotland, and Norway.

The Gulf Stream produces its most remarkable effects at this end of its immense journey, for which reason, as I said, it may be considered as one of the supreme agents in the organisation of the northern world, and should be studied in this connection. A map of the northern hemisphere will show a line indicating how far the icebergs detached from the North Pole come south, and it will be seen that this line descends as far as the 35th degree of latitude on the American coast—that is, as far as Cape Hatteras in North Carolina (which is a southern state: it is at the same latitude as Southern Algiers)—while it goes northwards with a great curve, round Norway and beyond the North Cape to about midway between it and Spitzberg, about the 75th degree of latitude—an enormous recoil to the north. The Gulf Stream keeps back these floating icebergs and melts them, and it keeps the sea round Norway free from ice in winter, whereas round Sweden, in the Gulf of Bothnia, and even in the Baltic, the sea is blocked by ice.[1] The temperature of the sea often exceeds that of the air in Norway by 25 degrees centigrade, a phenomenon that is not found elsewhere, and which is all the more extraordinary because the atmosphere there is not so cold as it is at other places of the same latitude. The air itself borrows much of its warmth from the Gulf Stream; the isothermal line describes a circuit round the country similar to the line of the icebergs, and the climate of Norway is classed as temperate.[2]

It is owing to the very perceptible warmth of the waters of the Gulf Stream, even in the neighbourhood of the North Pole, that the fish of extraordinarily prolific kinds whose habitat is in the northern seas find the Norwegian submarine bank an unparalleled place for spawning, even in the depths of winter. This is the so-called "undiscoverable bank."

[1] See *Atlas*, Vidal-Lablache, map 57, the dotted line indicating the limit of icebergs; and also *Atlas manuel*, Hachette, map 7.

[2] See *Atlas*, Vidal-Lablache, map 57; Foncin's *Atlas général*, map 57.

The codfish and the herring are the two most important kinds of fish that frequent the bank.

Their first visit to the bank, when they deposit their spawn, lasts from the end of December or the beginning of January till the end of March or the beginning of April.

But whence do they come? And how do they happen to come there?

Professor Sars, a learned Norwegian, who was employed by the Government to make investigations concerning the marketable fish of Norway, searched for the place from which they came. Up to that time it was a point upon which very little was known. His researches were not without success. They were published in memoranda addressed to the Norwegian Secretary of State for the Home Department from 1864 to 1893. According to Sars, "the codfish is not, as has been long believed, a strong swimmer scouring the immense wastes of the deep; it is, on the contrary, a comparatively sedentary species, which lives the whole year on the western slope of the Norwegian submarine plateau. It comes to the top of the plateau in winter because at the spawning period it seeks warmer water and needs an approximate temperature of 5 degrees centigrade. The comparative results of fishing in 1880 and 1881 on the portion of the bank opposite the department of Romsdal, as well as other observations, have been found to support this opinion. In February and March 1880, when the temperature of the sea at a depth of 54 fathoms continued at 4 and 8 degrees above freezing point, the fishing results were excellent; more than nine and a half millions of codfish were caught. The following year, when the temperature of the sea at the same depth sank to 3 and 2 degrees above freezing point, the returns were less by half. These variations of temperature are produced by modifications in the arrangement of the currents." (See Charles Rabot's book.[1])

The importance of the Gulf Stream is thus shown by Sars' methodical observations. The fecundity of the Norwegian fishing bank is due to this warm current. All benefits are attributable to it, whereas everything prejudicial is attributable to elements which counteract its action. The researches of

[1] *Aux fiords de Norvège et aux forêts de Suède*, p. 147.

Sars, continued by Dr. Hjort, tended to establish the fact that the variations in the beneficent influence of the Gulf Stream are due to the adverse intervention of a variable current of cold fresh water which comes from the Baltic, bringing the discharge of the rivers in autumn and the melted snow in spring, with the result that the heat of the water above the Norwegian bank is lowered and the sea is made less salt both by the winter and by the summer waters.

As for the herring, the conditions it requires are analogous to those I have just described, and, like the cod, it is not, according to Sars, "a native of the great ocean depths, as was supposed; on the contrary, it lives in the surface waters of the open sea. In all probability the herring, which in winter frequents the south-western coast of Norway, has its habitat in the part of the ocean between Scotland, Iceland, and Norway. All the shoals of herring, indeed, come from the north-west; at a distance of eighty miles from the coast navigators have observed them swimming invariably in that direction. In midwinter the herrings that have been dispersed in the open sea collect together and advance in enormous shoals towards the submarine plateau to deposit their spawn. Those which come to the north-west of Norway, to Tromsö, probably have their habitat farther north. According to Sars, the shoals of herrings that come to different parts of the coast of Northern Europe would thus each have a different place of origin." [1]

The reader must imagine these immense shoals of fish arranged in orderly fashion about the Norwegian bank, some distributed over its slopes, others all along its horizontal surface. He will then have a clearer idea of the way in which this radiating centre acts.

But we have not yet mentioned the whole force of its attractions, nor everything that it owes to the Gulf Stream. The fish do not come to it merely to hibernate and lay their eggs; in summer and autumn they find it a place for feasting, and the abundance of food attracts them to stay or sometimes to return there in much larger numbers. "The codfish," says Broch, "collect in large shoals, and come near the land, either to lay their eggs or to find food." In another passage he says,

[1] Rabot, p. 151.

"There are two fishing seasons for herrings: the winter season, which extends over the first months of the year, when the herring approaches the coast to lay its eggs; and the summer season, which extends over the summer and autumn months, when it nears the coast in search of food." [1] A recent well-informed traveller in those parts adds the following explanation: "The fish that hatch from the spawn remain on the coast for about a year, and then swim gradually towards the open sea. They would finally desert the coast completely were it not that certain circumstances retain them and even attract other shoals from the open sea. In seasons of calm (corresponding to the fine months of autumn and summer, mainly from June to September) the currents carry towards the coasts of Norway an incalculable mass of animalcules, upon which the fish feed. The arrival of this manna keeps the young fish, that were about to set out for the deep sea, in these latitudes, and at the same time entices back from the open those that had already emigrated. This, then, is the reason of the so-called summer fishing season." [2]

What, then, is this delicate fare? It is what is called in Norwegian the "aat" (pronounced ot). "It consists," says Broch, "of small shrimps (copepodes), small annelides, and a few mollusks. It is found in enormous quantities on the coast." This, then, is another benefit brought by the Gulf Stream. Le Play says, "Fish do not only feed on smaller species of their own kind; they are constituted so as to be able to assimilate infinitely small animalcules which exist in all sea-water, and are more or less in a state of dissolution. These marine animalcules increase with extraordinary rapidity in warm, tropical waters. The Gulf Stream, which is laden with them, is an essentially alimentary current." [3]

So the two distinct causes of attraction are these: the warmth and the nutritive qualities of the Gulf Stream, which divide the year between them as regards the fishing on the

[1] Dr. Broch, *Le royaume de Norvège et le peuple Norvegien.* A report to the Universal Exhibition of Paris, 1878, pp. 371, 381.

[2] Rabot, p. 153.

[3] Le Play, *Ouvriers européens,* vol. iii. p. 39.

Norwegian bank, and "renew the season," as an impresario would say; the warmth causes the winter season, and the abundance of sea products the summer season. Though each season may be said to have "its height," yet it must not be forgotten that except in cases where large apparatus is used in fishing, or where fishing is done on a large scale, fish are superabundant at all times. Moreover, the two seasons are separated by so short an interval that the one joins on to the other. Indeed, the winter fishing is also called the spring fishing, and the summer fishing is prolonged by a so-called autumn fishing.

Let us leave the sea for a time and go inland. We shall still find the sea there, even in the middle of the land.

I said above that the unparalleled formation of the land of Norway was the result of the combination of two fundamental factors. We have just seen the first factor in all its details, which I shall define as the *northern submarine bank bathed by the Gulf Stream.* The second, which combines in action with the first, is the *precipitous fiord.*

2. Before studying the second factor in detail it will be a good thing to take a bird's-eye view of it.

To begin with, what strikes one most is the contrast which the western slope of Scandinavia presents to the eastern. The typical district of the eastern slope is Götland or Gœtaland and Swealand—that is to say, Southern Sweden. "It is," says Broch, "a country of plains, which, as regards its structure and the nature of its surface, is comparable to the Danish isles. The characteristic type of the western slope is the Norwegian coast from Stavanger to North Cape, excluding the plateau of Trondhjem." Broch says of it, "It is the rockiest part of rocky Norway: *a representation of it in relief would reveal nothing but rugged slopes, or rather, actual precipices,* which rise often from the depths of the gulfs or from the narrow bottom of the valleys to giddy heights crowned with thick layers of clouds. When the mountain sides are less steep and bare, a belt of cultivated land interrupted by rocks can be seen on the sides of the inlet or on the slopes and at the bottom of the valleys. Immediately above the belt a zone of forests begins, often interrupted in the same way by rocks that have fallen and lie upon the mountain sides. Right above towers the bare peak, notched into

deep chasms, where the cold air of the plateaux is caught in a whirlwind. Sometimes sheep and goats get shut in among the crags of the mountains of the west in such a way that it is impossible for them to escape; to rescue them from their imprisonment it is necessary to be let down the face of the cliffs with the help of ropes. It also not infrequently happens that fodder has to be collected from the crevices in the rock, packed in nets, and thrown down from the top of the precipice." [1]

This is indeed a contrast to the beautiful, laughing plains of Sweden and Denmark.

Here is another sketch of the same kind: "The aspect of the country is always the same from whichever open pass between the two Scandinavian slopes you look at it: all along the eastern slope you ascend gradually through a series of long valleys; then, when once you are at the highest point, you see on the other side an abyss hollowed out between awful cliffs of rocks. On the east you see contours of pleasant lands, a perspective of hilltops diminishing in the distance, a uniform line of plateau descending gradually between long valleys to the horizon, brightened by strings of lakes. On the west, on the contrary, the land is broken up, fissured in every direction; awful chasms and craggy gulfs filled by the sea; on all sides formidable cliffs of rocks rising above the unfathomable depths of the fiords, and on all sides what valleys there are, are very short: in a word, a group of steep mountains flooded by the sea up to the foot of the highest peaks. On one side a continental region where the lowering of the level of the land is advantageous for the development of agriculture and for the growth of forests; on the other a maritime mountainous belt where industries connected with the sea form the chief means of livelihood of the inhabitants." [2]

It is a complete contrast.

In Western Scandinavia, where the natural formation is such as is described above, the fiord, that gulf of unfathomable depth, is the centre of organised life. Here is a glimpse of that very peculiar phenomenon: "When you come from the east," says a traveller, "after having gradually crossed the lofty plateau with a 'kariol' at your disposal, and suddenly

[1] Broch, pp. 4–6. [2] Rabot, p. 53.

see beneath you the fiord, you are astounded when you first catch sight of a steamer. For miles not a roof has been seen, not a sign of a village at the mountain's foot, nothing to announce a human settlement. And yet, down there, right at the bottom, a vessel, steaming along, looks like an insect that has fallen into a well. You go nearer: the ship grows larger, the masts lengthen; it is a real steamer, almost as important as those that cross from Dover to Calais. On certain days of the week or the month the steamer comes to renew for an instant the interrupted thread of life. It brings letters, provisions, merchandise; it comes to fetch someone for a journey. The only way of communicating with Gudvangen is by a kind of wherry or small boat. Your astonishment redoubles when you are on board the steamer. You cannot understand how a steamer of that size could have risked itself so far. Where can it get out? How did it get into this circle of rocks, which seem hermetically sealed? After a few turns of the paddles the opening is discovered. Between two spurs of the gloomy mountains, which seem to advance as if to accost each other, a bright slit opens. The light enters by it as if it were an air-hole; it spreads in a fan shape on the water. A powerful longing seizes you to escape through that slit of light. What is there beyond? Another lake, more crags, more clouds reflected in the clear water, more mysterious turns, which suddenly reveal infinite perspectives. For miles you could not say in what direction the water is flowing. It is a sleeping mirror, in which the colours displayed by the blue and white clouds in the sky, by the pine trees and brighter verdure, appear so clearly reflected that one ceases to distinguish the reality from the reflection. . . . Where can there be room for a house, you ask yourself, for a man's home? Rock and water have possession of everything! The Norwegians make answer by this legend. When God distributed good soil for corn over the earth's surface, He somehow happened to forget Norway. How could He make up for the mistake? He carefully collected in His divine hand the fragments of earth that remained at the bottom of His bag. He threw them at random over the forest of peaks. Then, to console those whom He had unintentionally disinherited, he put in their hearts the love of the land. What can be the state of mind of the people who attempt

to live between these threatening rocks and those bottomless precipices? Sometimes they live in a mere cleft, as at Gudvangen. Two awful walls overwhelm them. It is necessary to lie on one's back to see the sky. The character of these solitary people who have no book in which to read, except their own minds, is truly represented by that group of wooden houses (the gaard—a dwelling divided into little châlets) reflected in the tarnished looking-glass of the fiord. At incalculable depths the water creates a second sky; the human nests are hung between these two luminous points in a gulf of darkness. Where is the reality? Where is the seeming? Is the sky up there or at the bottom of these sleeping waters? It makes you feel giddy. Nevertheless, there is no need to speak ill of this flat, smooth water.

"When I caught sight of Orkedalsfjord, after a long and rather alarming journey across the Kiölen Mountains, which separate the Scandinavian slopes in the north, it was with all the delight of a Norwegian that I saw that monotonous water again. I felt that it meant freedom and was the bond of social life, the vehicle of thought. The fiords, the lakes, are not content, like mirrors in a gloomy palace, to double the light of the landscape by reflecting the sky. They bring fertility to the heart of the rocks. They make for themselves belts of fresh grass; they support flotillas of islets laden with trees. They draw down pines and willows from the top of the mountain to their pure water, into which they can plunge their roots in default of earth. These curtains of trees catch the dust flying in the air; every year the fallen leaves make a good loam at their feet. The layer of vegetable soil is deepened, and in the place where there was only a rough slope of rock, a little meadow appears. The Norwegian cows, free as goats, find out the way to it. The peasants, who seek their cattle in the mountains, trace them to the spot. They labour patiently with pickaxe or gunpowder to clear an easier passage to it; they throw down a few fir trees from the top of the chasm. They bring the framework of a house to the place. Come again the next year, it will smile at you with its roof of turf. Below, there will be a boat moored to a pine tree. Man will have wrested one more home from hostile nature." [1]

[1] Hughes Le Roux, *Notes sur la Norvège*, chap. i.

At the extremity of the fiord, where the sea comes to an end, a narrow valley generally begins, a prolongation of the fiord upon dry land. It is a fiord with a solid bottom, beyond the fiord with a liquid one. Therefore the Norwegians call it *fiorddal*, the valley of the fiord. A stream, now falling in cascades, now quite shut in, now hurrying down a slope, now broken by falls, flows there as in a cleft. The cliffs which form the steep sides of the valley gradually advance towards one another till they close it in completely with an impassable perpendicular barrier. If the cliff were scaled, no peak would meet the eye but a continuation of the valley, which looks as if it had remained suspended there. It is fringed sometimes by slender peaks, sometimes by gloomy, bell-shaped masses; this is what is called a *fielddal*, a mountain valley. This elevated region marks the end of a world; below, there are long strips of inhabited land; above, mighty billows of solitary, useless mountains; this is the *field*, the desert-like rampart between the two Scandinavian worlds.

Now that we have before our eyes a picture of the *precipitous fiord*, it is easy to form an idea of the three characteristics of the locality which exercised the greatest influence upon its inhabitants, as we shall presently see. They are: *the narrow and scattered pieces of land suitable for cultivation*; the *perpendicular banks*, favourable to the near approach of fish; the *sheltered waters*, favourable to navigation in small boats.

The pieces of land suitable for cultivation, narrow and scattered as they are, are not actually found in the steep slopes of rock, except where some cleft has been formed in its lofty walls, which has served as a receptacle for and barrier to a mass of dust, inorganic and organic, that has fallen down the declivity and spread out in a little platform on the shore. Man can there set foot on soil, erect a modest dwelling, cultivate a narrow estate, isolated and incapable of being extended, and make what use he may of the pine wood which has sprung up on the broken slope of the hill, and of the mountain pastures higher up. In the region of the precipitous fiords—namely, on the western slope—only one fiftieth part of the superficies is under cultivation.[1]

The *perpendicular banks*, which make it easy for fish to come

[1] Rabot, p. 54.

near, make the mechanism, as it were, of the submarine plateau wonderfully complete. If the plateau which nears the shore had been connected with it by an inclined plane, and welded to it by a sloping bank, just as the shallow bottom of the English Channel is attached to both its shores by gentle slopes, the fish would have stayed on the submarine terrace and would not have approached the land: they would not have found a sufficient depth of water along the coast-line. Man would have been obliged to go out to meet the fish in order to catch them; he would have had to venture abroad over the bank, and expose himself to the "perils of the sea." But it is just the contrary: the Norwegian coast is separated from the submarine plateau by a great depression in the sea bottom. This plateau does not serve as the base of the coast. The coast rests on a kind of pier or ledge which is much lower down beneath the water, so that there is a hollow between the coast and the plateau which is called the Norwegian Channel. Each of the fiords which riddle the Norwegian coast is really a marine abyss: for instance, the Trondhjem Fiord is 295 fathoms deep, the Romsdal Fiord is 240, the fiord at Söndmöre is 394, while the Sogne Fiord is 680 fathoms, an astounding depth for so narrow an arm of the sea.[1]

With such a depth of water, fish can come right up to the perpendicular wall of the fiord. They can swim on dry land, so to speak. Like the high-built Norwegian vessels, they can come close into the shore far into the interior of the country. They can cross it almost from end to end. The Sogne Fiord forms a passage for them 105·634 miles long, which comes to an end only 4·349 miles as the crow flies from the group of the Horunger Mountains, one of the highest points of the western slope; the Hardanger Fiord takes them a distance of 62·138 miles; the Nord Fiord, 43·496 miles; the Sundals Fiord, 34·17 miles, etc.[2]

The fish come in large numbers by the deep and countless openings which, as it were, transpierce the coast of Norway everywhere, and go to seek the fisherman at the very door of his dwelling in all the windings of the habitable parts of the country. The following fact shows the great abundance of the fish. Clever fishermen sometimes succeed in blockading a whole

[1] Rabot, p. 79. [2] Broch, p. 84; Rabot, p. 174.

shoal of fish by letting down a huge net beneath the water at the entrance of a narrow fiord which closes it like a curtain; in this way they can catch 110,050 bushels of herrings in a few days.[1] But, what is still more strange, the sea furnishes the Norwegians with fish even in the fresh water in the fiorddals—that is, the valleys that prolong the fiords—even above the rapids which the rivers form as they descend to the sea. "For a sedentary race," says Le Play, "the salmon is a more valuable article of food than the salt-water fish, because it climbs up all the streams, and, as it were, offers itself to the fisherman even among the steepest mountains. It forms a far more important article of food than the fish which live in the streams, because while it is growing it draws its chief supply of nourishment from the sea, and not from the fresh water. On reaching the adult age, salmon leave the sea, where the greater part of their development has taken place. They go up the streams in the spring at the time when the volume of water is swollen by the melting of the snow. They arrange themselves at such times in two lines, starting from the leading salmon, which is placed in the centre of the stream, and forming an acute angle, so that they meet the force of the current obliquely. They travel along with a peculiar noise, and with a speed that may be compared to that of a railway train. They rest during the night, and then begin the journey again by promptly forming into their angular line, with the strong members at the head and the weak at the rear; and so they go on until each one has reached the spot where it is destined to reproduce its species. Reproduction cannot take place except in fresh water and when certain definite conditions are present. The young salmon has partly the same food as other river fish; but he thrives best in the hot season, when he hunts insects which fly near the surface of the water, and which he snaps up by making constant rapid leaps from the water. After two years the salmon no longer finds sufficient nourishment in the river which gave him birth. He then goes down to its mouth, gradually gets accustomed to live in salter and salter water, till he finally disappears into the depths of the sea. There he grows rapidly and undergoes a great transformation. When four years old he is mature for reproduction and begins to

[1] Rabot, p. 155.

ascend the rivers (and, owing to a peculiar power he has of leaping out of the water, he is able to clear the rapids). When the eggs have been deposited, the large salmon, which cannot obtain sufficient food in the river, return to the sea. To sum up: the salmon owes the exceptional importance he has acquired amongst the natural products which the northern races turn to account principally to two circumstances. Like sea fish, the salmon finds all that is necessary for rapid development in the ocean, that great reservoir of food; but to satisfy the laws of reproduction of his species, he is obliged to deposit his spawn in fresh water. At such times he comes to every part of the mainland, and, as it were, offers himself to the fisherman to be caught. In Europe it is only the people of the north that benefit by this natural product, because that region possesses the only rivers where the salmon can find the very cool water in summer that is necessary for the incubation and hatching of his spawn. Moreover, it is probable that in this matter the Gulf Stream contributes directly in another way to the well-being of the people: it is in the waters of the Gulf Stream, in all probability, that the young salmon go and feed during the period of rapid growth which was mentioned above." [1]

All that I have quoted accentuates the advantages of the Norwegian environment. But there is still more to be said for it. The *sheltered waters* in the fiords and all along the coast make the system still more complete. A writer has described the appearance of the sea in these parts very well with a few strokes of the pen: "The mere look of the water," he says, "warns you that you are moving in the unknown; you have no longer before you the fluctuating sea, nor yet the river, with a country side of its own, creeping down to its mouth, but a living stagnant pool, like the water in a basin. The wavelet that travels away from each side of our steamer is heavy; it has the somewhat shiny look of oilcloth." [2] So, not only do the fish come and offer themselves up of their own accord, but the sea too, which brings them, conspires to invite the fisherman to catch them, by making its water dormant, so as to reassure him, make his work easy, and enable him to travel in a little boat without fear over the vast domain of the sea.

[1] Le Play, *Ouvriers européens*, vol. iii. p. 97.
[2] H. Le Roux, p. 3.

The submarine bank, which rises outside the entrance to the fiords, and protects them from the waves of the deep sea; their depth, which tends to check surface agitation by the heavy mass of water below; the height of their rocky sides, the winding route they follow, the distance which they penetrate into the land, all help to screen them from the winds of the high seas, but are not the only causes of the calmness of their waters. A further peculiarity has now to be studied; the special organisation of the place reveals another wonder, a fresh harmony of nature. Along the Norwegian coast stretches a belt of innumerable islands, islets, and rocks, almost without interruption, which protects the mainland from the sea.

This is what is known as the *Skjaergaard*, and it is inside the sprinkling of islands, between it and the coast, that the coasting trade goes on. It is a regular patrol route, a channel for circumnavigation, which goes all along the coast of Norway from Gothenburg in the south of Sweden, near the Norwegian frontier, as far as Cape North. In this natural canal the waters are calm and sheltered. Their depth is favourable to navigation; the great lateral depression of the sea bottom, the great "fiordian cavity," or Norwegian Channel, is below. The following is a rapid sketch a traveller has made of this formation, which is peculiar to Norway: "On coming out of the fiord we see an absolutely extraordinary sight: we again come upon the enigmatical coastal archipelago, the *Skjaergaard*, of which we caught a glimpse in crossing from Christiansand to Christiania; but it is far more barren and wilder here (on the west coast). Not a clump of trees anywhere, scarcely a blade of sickly grass among the stony hillocks. On all sides banks of strange pebbles, and in all directions masses of islands and rounded rocks, like the heads of colossal screws buried in the middle of the sea. A shower of aerolites seems to have fallen upon the surface of the ocean, and their points alone emerge above the waves. The spectacle remains the same everywhere and always, and yet, for hours and hours one is absorbed in the contemplation of it; it is so strange and fantastic. The steamer follows the channel along the coast, it passes to the south of a large mass of land, the island of Hitteren; and beyond, the islands begin again, thick as dust. Round the island of Smölen, which appears next, their number

rises to 2600. According to Professor Helland, the department of Romsdal, which includes this piece of coast, embraces more than 8000 islands; and yet the coast-line of Romsdal, from north to south, with all its indentations, does not exceed 99·42 miles.

"To the south of Smölen, the channel formed by the islands fades away and disappears, drowned in the ocean's vast horizon: the archipelago of islands by the coast, that protective rampart, dissolves itself into an unbroken line of ocean. Straightway the motionless surface of the water breaks into slow undulations. Lifted by the swell, the steamer rolls and staggers like a drunken man. After an hour of rolling, we again enter the calm channel."[1]

"The canals through this coastal archipelago," as the same writer well says, "form the national roads, and the fiords the parish roads."

This is the road that lay open before our emigrants. This is the way by which they came.

We are now able to introduce them into their new country. As we are acquainted with it, it will be easy to follow them. If we had wished to accompany them and observe their actions, without knowing the country beforehand, we should have been constantly stopped by obscurities, we should have travelled in uncertainty through an unknown land. At each step we should have needed explanations, sometimes long commentaries. The connection between the numerous causes, which we have seen depending on each other in a wonderful sequence, would have escaped us. We should not have understood the whole force of those local conditions which are so closely knitted together in one vast whole, and which bring together phenomena which produce such momentous results. We should have had only confused and fragmentary views of many things. We should have been like tourists who have not prepared their route beforehand.

By making a study of the Germanic, Gothic, and Odinid ancestors of our emigrants, we acquired a fairly profound knowledge of the sources of development of their first form of society. We were also obliged to make ourselves fairly well acquainted with the special conditions of place, which brought about such a great transformation. We now know both elements, and

[1] Rabot, pp. 85, 87.

have them at hand, ready to be used. We shall now proceed to put them together, and a combination will be the result, as one conclusion follows from two well-grounded premises.

There is no other element to be introduced into the problem. When the Gothic emigrants began to settle in Norway they found the country unoccupied. Therefore there is no question of any influence having been exercised upon them by people belonging to another form of society.

Archæologists conversant with prehistoric times declare that the steep coasts of Norway were not peopled until the arrival of the race that still inhabits them, and that race is recognised to be the same as that which now occupies Sweden. Social Science explains this fact very well. A country of the type that we have just described could not be inhabited by either of the two kinds of societies which inhabited Europe in primitive times: the compact form of society of the real patriarchal tribes and the unorganised society of the hunters. The patriarchal tribes could not move except in a numerous body. How could narrow platforms of land, scattered far apart about the fiords, offer a place of settlement to establishments consisting of a large number of persons incapable of living in isolation, and closely bound together by habit and by what I should term artificial requirements? Imagine the arrival in such a place of the large and tumultuous bands of ancient Germans from Lower Germany that Tacitus describes, and see if the country of Norway would not be absolutely inadequate for their ordinary everyday life as the historian has pictured it to us. Nor were the hunters any better suited to turn the country to good account. For what sort of game do you suppose they could hunt with any profit in a place like that, cut up into chasms and gulfs? Everything presents obstacles to hunting. And what obstacles they are! Moreover, large game is rare there; what is there for it to feed on? There is hardly anything to hunt except birds. Fishing would be the only attraction for a race of hunters. But, however superabundant fish may be, it cannot satisfy all the diverse needs of life; it does not supply material for clothing, which is as absolutely necessary in that region as food. Hunters would find it more worth while to occupy the wider and colder districts of the north, where furry animals could supply them with the

chief necessaries of life. That is what they actually did; so neither the patriarchal tribes of the south nor the hunters of the north were able to supply inhabitants for the west coast of Norway. There is, however, one piece of evidence showing the presence of fishermen and troops of hunters in Norway before the arrival of our emigrants—that is, a *kjökkenmödding*, a heap of culinary débris, composed of remains of shells and bones of wild animals; but it must be observed that these remains were found in Trondhjem, a region which, as far as its natural structure is concerned, should be part of Sweden. It is also connected with that country by a much-frequented road across the mountains, so that it seems like an offshoot to the west, an opening, an excrescence on the western slope. Vestiges of this kind in Scandinavia are found only in the plains, chiefly in those of Denmark; the natural formation of the places where they are always found is well defined. Nothing corresponding to the *kjökkenmödding* is found in regions where the coast is rocky.

Dr. Broch makes the following remark, which is a further proof that the country was uninhabited at the time of the arrival of the emigrants: "The Norwegian 'gaards'—that is to say, the isolated dwellings—all bear names which generally date from the time of their first establishment in the country, and often show some traces of it. All over Norway there are gaards bearing names that refer to the beaver, an animal which is very widely spread over the country and lives gregariously. Now it is an undisputed fact that colonies of beavers soon disappear when man's presence comes to disturb their solitude. Therefore these names show that the gaards date from the first settlement of men in the land. A large number of rivers and islands bear names that have the same origin." [1]

The type of men needed to people our Norwegian coast was such as had sprung from families in which the patriarchal system had been considerably weakened, not through decadence but through progress. They must have been men who had been impelled by excess of energy, not by a love of idleness, to quit the community, who had been broken in to the work of agriculture, and were capable of that steady labour without which it would have been impossible to turn the shreds of land scattered in

[1] Broch, p. 205.

the hollows of the fiords into fertile fields capable of providing those necessaries of life which fishing alone does not furnish, and which the wandering tribes of hunters were incapable of procuring for themselves. Moreover, they must have brought with them the cereals of the north—rye, barley, and oats—as well as cows, goats, and sheep, in order to have a complete food supply and material for clothing. The emigrants trained on the eastern slope of Scandinavia were just the men capable of fulfilling these requirements; and they fulfilled them.

There are two ways of forming an exact idea of the conditions which these emigrants found on their first arrival in the new country.

The first way is to examine the local conditions under which the inhabitants of the Norwegian coast live nowadays. The place has not changed. We are well enough acquainted with it to know how far it deserves to be placed in the category of places that cannot be transformed. What new shape could those rocks and that sea assume or those peaks and steep slopes, those immovable mountain-tops? How could that free oceanic people, the fish, ever change? In this respect Norway has no history, and indeed she has scarcely any at all, surrounded as she is by unchanging conditions of life. It is easy to distinguish every new event that has supervened since the beginning, because it comes from some cause outside the country or because it carves a date for itself as every remarkable change does in a country which is not made for change. The following are the chief examples:—

Thus, *the period is known* at which the cultivation of land—a practice as old as the inhabitants—began to spread into the interior of the land as men began less on the results of fishing. "In the first Iron Age" (from Odin's epoch till the seventh century), says Broch, "the valleys with less fertile soil, suitable for woods only—in Österdal, for example, and Numedal—were still almost uninhabited. But during the second period of the Iron Age (which begins about the year 700) they were inhabited, as were (generally speaking) all the mountain valleys of Southern Norway which were suitable for permanent dwellings, and which are well populated in the present day."[1] "It was not till after the introduction of Christianity, about the

[1] Broch, p. 205.

year 1000, and after the expeditions of the Vikings, that agriculture and cattle-rearing could be considered equal in importance to fishing." [1]

It is known at what period trade in wood began to rank among the country's sources of wealth: "It was in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries," says Broch, "that the cultivation of forests began to enter into account as a branch of commerce; but it is only in latter years that the sale of wood has reached a figure comparable to that of the sale of fish, and has eventually surpassed it. From the beginning of the seventeenth century the towns on the south coast of Norway acquired a good deal of importance owing to this new article of commerce. The Dutch at that time had the commerce of the North Sea in their hands, and came to Norway to get wood in the rough state. Towards the middle of the seventeenth century sawmills worked by water began to spring up in Norway, but very many years passed before they could rival the work done by Dutch mills. A large number of small towns were built about that time on the south coast near the mouths of the rivers that were used for the floating of the wood." [2]

It is known at what period the mines first began to be worked. "The skilled working of mines and foundries in Norway began three hundred and sixty years ago. Christian III. was the first to call in German miners and to give orders in 1539 for the first organised working of the mines according to the German system. And during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the mines acquired great importance." [3]

It is known at what period a new method of preserving cod was introduced. There are two manners of preparing the fish. The first produces the *törfisk* (dried fish) or the *rundfisk* (round fish in the shape of a stick). Now, it is known that this was formerly the only method used; it is still used by the fishermen for preserving fish for their own use. As for the other method, which produces the *klipfish* (split fish), it is known to have been introduced into Norway by the English at the beginning of the eighteenth century." [4]

It is known at what period the herring became an article of exportation: "So long as it was only preserved as smoked

[1] Broch, p. 371.
[2] *Ibid.* pp. 371, 434.
[3] *Ibid.* p. 365.
[4] *Ibid.* pp. 376, 377.

herring or dried herring (*i.e.* dried in the air), the only method of preparation that was used in ancient times, it was impossible for it ever to become an article of commerce of any importance, although it formed the chief means of sustenance of the people living on the banks of rivers well stocked with fish. But when the Dutchman Beuckel invented the method of salting the herring in 1416, and when this mode of preparation had been adopted in Norway, the herring fisheries on the west coast became of national importance, and could take rank beside the cod fisheries." [1]

It is known at what period the smallest details of fishing appliances were improved. "The bottom line was introduced at the beginning of the fifteenth century at Söndmöre (west coast). This line is about 218 yards long and has 120 hooks attached to it at intervals of 4 to 6½ feet. It is kept horizontal by means of cable-buoys at a depth that varies according to the depth at which the fish swim. The buoys were formerly made of wood or cork, but now they generally consist of globes of hollow glass attached by strings. They are called *Glaskavl*. Nets are a much more recent invention. They were invented at the end of the seventeenth century, and were only gradually introduced in the course of the eighteenth century. The fishing net used for cod is about 43½ yards by 4¼, with meshes about 2¾ inches across. It is placed in the water with its longer side horizontal, and hangs down at the desired depth, where it is sustained by buoys. The codfish, in striking violently against this barrier, gets its head caught in the meshes, and is a prisoner; in trying to extricate itself, it expires." [2]

These examples show how it is possible, nay easy, to eliminate everything which does not date from the beginning, and to separate it from what actually exists in Norway now. Moreover, that which dates from the beginning must necessarily be that which is imperiously demanded by the unchanging nature of the place for the support and reproduction of a race.

But there is a second way of forming an idea of what happened in the beginning. It is this: to observe what still goes on in those parts of the Norwegian coast which have been uninhabited till now or but little inhabited, where people still continue to settle. The absolutely simple and primitive

methods that are adopted by emigrants of the present day, and that are directly suggested by the permanent natural resources of the place, show in a realistic and irrefutable manner how the first emigrants must infallibly have acted.

In the first place, we must consider the means of transport used by the emigrants.

In Norway there is only one simple means of transport within the reach of everyone: it is the small boat or wherry, which a single man can propel with oars or with the help of a square sail suspended from a yard. It is at once a simple means of locomotion and a necessary one. For it is impossible to have any other roads for penetrating into the country than the canal of the skjaergaard and the fiords, except at the cost of immense labour. Norway is a rustic Venice on a vast scale. But the wherry, besides being simple and necessary, has also the merit of being serviceable everywhere, as the water of the fiords is calm and of such a depth as to prevent it from striking against the bottom on nearing the shore.

The Gothic emigrant appreciated this means of transport. He was familiar with it. He used to employ it on the eastern slope, which, though it possessed no skjaergaard nor rugged fiords, no sea free from ice nor fisheries on the Norwegian bank, nor had any lack of cultivable lands, was none the less a land in great part submerged, where the skiff was in everyday use. We have mentioned before that the Goths were obliged in former days to make use of the wherry for transporting their land produce (as are the peasants of Brandenburg at the present day), when they were in the well-watered region round the Spree and the Havel where Berlin is now situated, and where they stopped on their journey towards Scandinavia. With an instrument so familiar to him as the wherry, with a water-way as straightforward as the canal of the skjaergaard, which conducted him as far as Gothenburg in Gothland, the emigrant had no need of anyone to show him the way into the new country. He was all-sufficient in himself: that is the great fact which is evinced and which will remain in evidence till the end. He did not feel it a necessity to set out with a party, surrounded by a detached portion of the family or with a band of friends. If he was married, his wife could accompany him without danger and without fatigue. The

wherry could hold the stock of indispensable tools, a fairly good supply of provisions, even a domestic animal or two. Besides, as I said before, goats, sheep, and cows used to take possession of the land of their own accord without a guide, like true pioneers, passing through the rugged passages in the rocks on the coast. The new land was not far off; it was separated from the mother country only by an imaginary line; it began at the headland by Stavanger. The voyage was easily accomplished by short stages. Wherever there was a piece of rising ground by the shore, the traveller could draw up alongside of it as if it were a quay, step on land, pull up the boat on to the sloping bank at the edge, turn it over, and take shelter under it. The boat with its keel in air rested on one of its edges, while the other was propped up on some stakes that were chopped from the branch of a fir tree on the spot. In this way the hatchet, the heraldic emblem of Norway, was first called into play. To render this shelter still more perfect, if it were necessary to stay in it some length of time, it could be put under the impermeable covering of the pine trees; two low walls of strips of turf like gable-ends could be constructed at the two extremities of the half-overturned boat, which formed the roof and back wall. A heap of resinous wood chips furnished a fire. The sea supplied fish, which could be caught even from the shore. Henceforward the sea became the chief and easy means of subsistence, the spontaneous source of food, which it yielded to man without any long preliminary labour on his part. Scenes such as I have just described may still be seen to-day in the northern parts of the coast where settling is still going on. Other things beside fish can be obtained for food, such as birds of several kinds, and wild fruit, which is fairly common—currants, sloes, blackberries, raspberries, strawberries, barberries, wild cherries. But the sea, the boat, and the provisions for the voyage are the emigrant's mainstay during the period when he is looking for a place that can supply his needs and furnish him with a home.

The emigrant, then, pursued his journey until he found a place where he could erect a dwelling. This must necessarily have been one of those corners of land fit for cultivation which are found far apart in the fiords, and which are indispensable to a home, as the food can then be supplemented by cattle

and cereals, while wool and leather, hemp and flax can be produced for clothing.

Among the different kinds of wood which the locality placed at his service on all sides he found pine-wood, a material admirably suited for the easy construction of a dwelling. Its grain is rectilineal, and it is a wood that is easily worked. As our emigrant had to do all the work by himself, his house had to be limited to small dimensions. "At Bygdö, in Norway, there is to be seen a carefully preserved specimen of a 'rögstue,' a 'smoky hut,' the primitive Scandinavian house. It is a wooden hut with a hole in the pointed roof where the smoke may escape from the fireplace, which stands on a stone in the centre. The rögstue remained in use a very long time. In the first half of the eighteenth century every dwelling used still to contain a rögstue, and it still exists to-day in Icelandic houses." [1] The dwelling, reduced in that case to a single room, is completed by the addition of a number of similar structures, each for a different use.

If the emigrant at the end of his search had stopped at a place where there were large spaces of land fit for cultivation and habitation like those on the eastern slope, he would have infallibly returned to the way of life in which he was brought up. He would only have changed from the position of being a son in the family to that of the head of a family. That would have been the extent of his emancipation. But the narrowness of the estate which the cleft in the rock formed for him, and into which he made his way, absolutely prevented him from reproducing the type of family from which he sprang. No extension of the estate was possible on this little deposit of soil. Cliffs of rock, bottomless depths of water, prevented it. He could not keep his children round him. He could not do so, and their co-operation was not necessary to him. The management of the boat, together with the cultivation of his field, in which his wife helped, provided him with just enough to do. What work was there for his sons? How could he multiply his means of livelihood to keep pace with their number? So there he was, prevented from establishing the patriarchal system in his family by the limits of the place. He was able to get there alone; he was also obliged to remain there alone. He was also cut off from neighbours. The estates

[1] Rabot, p. 43.

were as far apart as the nooks in the walls of the fiord. He came to seek independence, he found the place for it: it was imposed upon him to the end by the force of his surroundings. And when he had tasted it under conditions that were favourable both for him and his sons, he never forsook it, neither did they, nor their descendants. The new type of family was fixed, like all discoveries, by its proved advantages.

If it was true that the father could not keep his sons at home, it was also true that the sons were naturally impelled to make a home for themselves elsewhere. The first son was as a small boy, even as a very small boy, employed to help his parents —his father in the boat, his mother in the care of the cattle, both of them in the cultivation of the field. It was, after all, an easy apprenticeship in so simple a state of things. As soon as a great longing for independence arose in the youth, he felt that he in his turn was fit to do what his father had done before him. He was capable of seeking an estate of his own and making a home for himself with his own hands. He had the same means at his disposal as his father had. He knew how to shape a boat, and there were habitable nooks in the fiord farther off. He set out. Each son in turn made his start under the same circumstances. *Thus they all left the paternal home early in life, prepared to make for themselves an estate of cultivated land.*

And the daughters, what became of them? The father could no more keep them at home than he could his sons; the same difficulty arose. Each daughter in turn was apprenticed to the work, giving the mother as much help as she needed. By the time they reached the age when they turned their thoughts towards getting a home of their own, they were well prepared for the energetic and solitary life without which it was impossible that their desire could be fulfilled. Their father's poverty could give them no other dowry than their equipment and training; but that dowry was thoroughly appreciated by the young men who needed a capable helpmate. Moreover, the married couple could not expect to have any other society than their own: they had to be so well suited as to be entirely sufficient for each other. Hence the young women and the young men were at perfect liberty to choose each other, without having to take into consideration the opinion of a large family group.

In this way an entirely new family organisation was gradually

developed, an organisation that is well named *particularist*, and which is in almost direct opposition in every point to that of the *patriarchal* family, and shapes it to quite other destinies.

But this is not the end. When the father, who was thus left alone, considered what was to become of his property at his death, he saw that if he divided it, it would be destroyed, and that the portions which he might distribute among his children would be useless to them. His property was such that it could no more be divided than it could be extended. Moreover, each of his children had what was sufficient for his needs. So he felt himself at liberty to dispose of his property in whatever way was most convenient for all parties, without any reference to the theory of equal division, which would be out of place. In that point too he went against the patriarchal feeling. He came to an agreement with one of his sons, who was less occupied with his own estate, whether from circumstances or from his own desire, than the rest, and who was the most disposed and the best able to profit by the arrangement, and to him he assigned his property. It was not so much a question of an inheritance as of a contract. The conditions were freely discussed on both sides. Had there been no paternal affection involved, it might as well have been a business affair transacted with a stranger. In this way, under the pressure of new conditions of life, a kind of mutual independence sprang up on all sides, even in the heart of the family, an independence both of will and deed. The father ceded the estate, the buildings, the fishing implements to the son; but he reserved for himself the rights, as it were, of a member of a company who has funded property over the produce of his son's labour. His means of subsistence were assured to him for the time when he could work no longer. He also stipulated for certain benefits for the rest of his children, which the inheritor had to grant in due time, and which were calculated according to the advantages of the estate and the various situations of those who were to receive them. The case of succession I have just described is the simple case. Beyond that, arrangements varied. But they were always limited by the indivisibility of the estate. Thus, if there were several estates, there would not be only one inheritor; the estates would be distributed, but not divided; there would be as many inheritors as there were estates; and it would be a stipulation that the other

children should receive certain benefits from the different estates.

Though the father ceded his estate, he still lived on it. He did not, however, share a dwelling with his son, so strong was the force of circumstances. The Norwegian house, as we have seen, is not a single building. It is an aggregate of little cabins which together make up a complete whole. The reasons that make us determine how many rooms a house shall have, in Norway determine the number of cabins. The aggregate of cabins is called the *gaard*, a word which stirs the Norwegian heart as the word *home* stirs the English heart. The difficulty of finding a place for constructing a house accounts for this arrangement. There are very few flat surfaces of any extent. And, besides, it would be difficult for a single man unaided to construct a house of large dimensions and keep it repaired. Man must depend on himself alone in everything. When the son who inherited the estate received the gaard, he had to enlarge it by building a dwelling for his father: he did this by adding another cabin to it, in which his parents lodged apart.

It is indeed a wonderful transformation that has taken place in the patriarchal family. Personal responsibility has been pushed to the extreme. In the following chapters I will give the reader a complete picture of the form of society which developed from it.

However, I must stop here for the present. I merely intended to show what a wonderful combination of things led to this new social state.

But before terminating, I must turn back to the point from which I started, to make a final observation. It also has to do with this concatenation of circumstances.

All that I have just described was undoubtedly the result of the influence of Norway. But Norway could not have brought about that result except in a race that was thoroughly accustomed to the cultivation of land. Although fishing in Norway became the necessary means of subsistence and the great resource of that race, yet it did not usurp the place of the cultivation of land, an art that had been thoroughly learned in the land of the Goths. The Norwegian fisherman was not a navigator—he might become one accidentally; special vocations sprang up,

varying in number according to the circumstances of the time—but he was, and would remain, essentially a peasant, a man belonging to the land. The new conditions of the land he worked were the cause of his entire evolution. And moreover, as we shall see, in spite of what appears at first sight, his evolution owed a great deal to the powerful influence which the estate had upon the Norwegian. When the Gothic emigrant began to explore the resources of the sea on the coast of Norway—without which he would not have been able to live, and which were the mainstay of his independence—he did it as a peasant, a labourer, or a landowner would do it. He did not sail the high seas; he did not try to fish over the submarine bank; but he found, adjoining his estate, a stretch of liquid plain on which he went to and fro in a little boat for only a few hours during the day, dragging long lines with several hooks attached to them, just as he would have furrowed the solid plain with the ploughshare. He was a real peasant fisherman, whom the name of seacoast fisherman suits above all others, and to whom it applies in a special sense. He took possession of the marine estate which stretched out in front of his land estate, just as anyone would take possession of an alluvial accretion which might happen to augment his property on dry land; it was literally and legally his property. No one else except himself had the right to fish there. This law, which was borrowed from that of the appropriation of land, was so deeply rooted in his conception of the ownership of land, that if he were to have had his estate on the verge of the seashore facing the vast ocean, he would not have hesitated to appropriate the whole stretch of sea before him. That was the ancient law, which has remained intact till modern times and is still in force to a great extent.

So the small, narrow estate of the fiord in the hands of the Gothic emigrant, the seacoast fisherman, took precedence over the open sea, which it made subject to its own laws. At the same time it caused its owner to leave the patriarchal and found the particularist form of society. Among the races that are the inheritors of that form of society—the Saxons, the Franks, the English, the Americans—we shall see how the estate exerts a more powerful influence than a great number of other forces.

But, first of all, we must look at the new form of society which the transformation, simultaneously brought about in the family and in the estate by the influence of local conditions, engendered among this Norwegian people.

CHAPTER IV

THE SEACOAST FISHERMEN OF NORWAY—*Continued*

NOW that I have described in some detail the origin and first steps in the development of the particularist form of society, I propose to trace out its development through history up to the present time.

So extensive a subject ought, I think, to be presented in as didactic and concise a form as possible, in order that the reader may be able to get a complete grasp of it. The proof of my statements about the great social phenomenon which I am going to trace throughout its development will lie in the well-known character of the facts, in their strict scientific sequence, and in the reader's own experiences, which will come to confirm them on all points.

It is a fact which constantly recurs, that *the natural formation of every locality* brings about a social transformation in immigrants to whom it is new, and that this transformation is relative to the habits of life they have previously acquired under the influence of the natural surroundings of one or more other localities.

The form of society which our Gothic immigrants of the western slope brought with them from the other slope was that of peasants who were progressive agriculturists, belonging to families which were still patriarchal though of a very much modified type. The transformation they underwent in the precipitous fiords of Norway resulted in a complete rupture with the communal system.

The new lands they had to cultivate, scattered here and there on narrow accretions of soil, could neither be extended to supply the needs of more than one household and its young children, nor be divided to any purpose between the scattered heirs. Each adult son in his turn was obliged to look for some

habitable nook in the recesses of that rocky land, and to accustom himself to do without the help which is afforded by the association of individuals, and to depend on that "self-help" which is acquired by the personal development of an estate.

There was no law of inheritance with regard to property, but a private contract was usually made in which the father, on reaching old age and being desirous of having a partner, agreed, as if in a free covenant, to transmit his property to that one of his married sons who might happen to be the most ready to accept an agreement of that kind, at the cost of bestowing some smaller advantages upon his brothers and sisters. This custom, by the way, still continues in spite of all written law.

All this was necessitated by the *nature of the cultivable land*; the spirit of independence, and the ability possessed by the immigrants who had come from a progressive society, predisposed them for it. Three things, moreover, which proceeded from their maritime surroundings, rendered it possible—

1. The small boat, a means of transport that could be managed *by one person*, and was easy to use for getting about to all parts of the country in the sheltered waters of the skjaergaard and the fiords.

2. The fishery, that could be worked *by one person*, and was actually at the edge of his estate, penetrating even into the most remote corner of the land, and containing an unheard-of abundance of fish, which came from the great Norwegian bank. Fish, which was a natural product, was a necessity, so long as nothing could be obtained from the land, and it afterwards supplemented the land produce.

3. The instruments for fishing, that could be handled *by one person*—the small boat and the trailing or stationary line.

The effect on private life of a new art of obtaining food—namely, seacoast fishing—is shown in these facts. This new art is responsible for the transformation of a peasant of Eastern Scandinavia, a solitary emigrant from the patriarchal home, into a peasant fisherman of the west coast, the head of a particularist family.

Such a transformation is extraordinary, since it means that the family, the basis of all social organisation, has passed, not from one variety to another, but from one genus to another, from a way of life founded on the *association of persons* to one

founded *on the ability of the individual to create a home for himself.* By following the history of the emigrants that became "particularists" in the same way as we traced their history under the patriarchal system of life from the Aralo-Caspian basin, we shall see the development of all the consequences of this change.

But before transporting this particularist family to other parts, where it will find other arts of obtaining food and other means of transport, we ought to examine the effect of its mode of living upon public life, in the locality to which we have just followed it—that is, in Western Scandinavia, on the shores of the North Sea.

The effect is simple: public life is abolished; private life, which is all-sufficient to itself, has triumphed absolutely.

We have just seen how the small boat and seacoast fishing enabled each individual emigrant to live alone, by giving him the means of making a home for himself with his own hands, and since these two things put an end to family life of the communal type, with all the more reason did they cut short public communal life. They enabled the peasant fisherman to do without a community, nay, even to do without a neighbour and a master.

So it must be well understood that the small boat serves rather to isolate than to unite the Norwegians. All the facts go to strengthen our belief in this. What strikes us about them is, not that they live in an aggregation on the seashore and in the fiords, as if they were in a public square or in the streets; not their facility for gathering together from all sides; but, on the contrary, their power of living alone, in isolation. It is a very marked characteristic among the Norwegians.

In the isolation created by fishing from small boats, what sort of institution will grow up to take the place of the community and the public life that have passed away?

The answer is: the small estate, that has to be transmitted in its entirety.

In the system of small estates and associated heirs (*associé-héritier*) this isolated peasant will find the most perfect organisation of his independence, the two most efficacious means by which he may be directly self-sufficient.

But why not in actual fishing? Fishing is his mainstay

while he is developing his estate, and afterwards it supplements the produce of the land. Further, it is the mainstay of his sons while in their turn they are developing new estates, and afterwards supplements the produce of their fields. But fishing can be no more than a means and a supplement. The reason is obvious. Fishing is inferior to other means of living in so far as it provides only a very special kind of food. It satisfies only one need—that of food—and moreover, satisfies it very incompletely. Other arts for obtaining food provide all that is necessary for nourishment, and incidentally satisfy other needs: the nomadic pastoral art, for example, provides mare's milk, a complete form of nourishment, and also skins and fleeces for housing and clothing; or again, the sedentary pastoral art provides cow's milk, meat, and the vegetables produced by a rudimentary form of agriculture; or again, the cultivation of land, properly so called, provides similar things and cereals in addition; and these two latter arts supply wood and material from the earth for building purposes, as well as animal and vegetable tissues for clothing. But fish—at any rate the small kinds that are caught by seacoast fishermen—are insufficient as food and of no use for housing and clothing.

So, though seacoast fishing provided a convenient, easy, and abundant means of living, yet it was insufficient, and satisfied no other needs. For this reason those engaged in it were obliged to revert to the care of a domain.

There are therefore two conclusions to be drawn: *the small estate is necessary to supplement the fishing*; and *the small estate takes precedence over the fishing.*

We now know the secret of that powerful instinct which compelled the men of the north to "acquire lands." We know the secret of the evolution which, after having transformed the peasant belonging to a patriarchal family into a seacoast fisherman, transformed the seacoast fisherman into a simple peasant with a particularist family. The small estate and the system of the associated heir form the twofold institution which, for him, will completely and definitively take the place of the private community, and, as much as possible, of every kind of public community. He will strive to make this institution take the place even of seacoast fishing, which

was his mainstay in the first instance and was found incomplete.

This movement, which has animated all the men of the north throughout history, is the same which animates the whole Norwegian world at the present day. It encourages the development of land cultivation in Norway in the interior of the country. There is no longer as much need as before to go and seek better land in other countries. It is often observed that seacoast fishermen leave the north to go to the cultivated lands of the south, while those from the fiords go up to the fields in the mountain valleys. It is the same movement which compels the Norwegian seacoast fisherman, when he cannot easily obtain land, to turn to maritime commerce and to the cultivation of wood with the purpose of saving money for a more costly estate. The small estate that can be transmitted only in its entirety is capable of constituting the complete kingdom of the isolated Norwegian and of making him and his single household absolutely independent. While things are still in that elementary condition, it is possible for a single household to form a complete society, which is self-sufficient. Neither a community nor public life is necessary.

This state of affairs seems to be the outcome of the patriarchal family of the nomadic shepherd, which in its own way forms a complete society. Indeed, it is at the same time its outcome and its counterpart. Though it may be said of the nomadic patriarchal system, "Public life is there unnecessary," yet it cannot be said, "It has no community." That is the source of the fundamental difference between the patriarchal and the particularist systems which will be revealed throughout the whole development of society. The patriarchal system is founded on the enforced community of people, and no land is owned except through the community: the community owns the land, distributes it for cultivation, and periodically resumes the control of it. The particularist system, on the contrary, is founded on the direct ownership of the land, and rejects the enforced community of persons.

Once the reader has thoroughly grasped that the particularist form of society is a system based upon independence and founded on the following things: namely, on seacoast fishing at the start; ultimately on the estate heritable only in its

entirety, and on the ease with which it can be acquired; once he has grasped this, he will find that it contains the key to the history, the institutions, the manner of thinking and acting of the particularist races. There is no essential characteristic in their life that cannot be referred to that fundamental principle.

Among these races, independence upon a small estate, and the supremacy of the small estate, are the two factors which dominate the very usages of public life, and, on occasion, entirely supersede them.

At the start, Norway literally belonged to the type I have described. Later on, life there became more complicated, though not really so to any great extent. The following causes tended to make it less simple:

1. The activity of other races, which established relations with Norway.

2. The development of other arts besides seacoast fishing—the natural result of intercourse with foreigners.

However, Norway did not lose much of its simplicity, for the reason that the fundamental basis of its way of life, the small estate, could not change. It could not change:

1. Because the poverty of the soil continued to make cultivation on a small scale much easier than cultivation on a large scale.

2. Because seacoast fishing continued to encourage the emigration of those who did not wish to increase their father's estate, even where it was possible, and who wanted to get estates of their own.

So that the independence of the peasant in his gaard really represents the fundamental form of government in Norway at the present time as in the beginning. The rest is only a very secondary and quite subordinate addition.

The Norwegian is so self-sufficient that even in his private life he very seldom forms associations, however free they may be and however well qualified he may be to form them, as the associations for deep-sea fishing show.

He is inclined to make use of association only where it is absolutely necessary: the associations that he forms for deep-sea fishing are only temporary, and renewable at every expedition. In the fish trade he prefers to sell to large foreign

merchants rather than organise societies for selling fish, not only because he has the good sense to see that an association cannot compete with large individual enterprise, but because he prefers to have a free power of acting, to be independent.

For still stronger reasons, he is very loath to accept enforced association, the association which constitutes public life properly so called, and he strives to reduce it to its simplest conditions. The history of the past and the situation of the present day in Norway in this respect may be summed up in four statements :

1. In any conflict which a Norwegian may happen to have with any of his neighbours, who are as independent as himself, he does not approve of the intervention of any superior authority, but likes direct settlement : some agreement must be made as between two independent powers.

In the past it was owing to this peculiarity that the system of settling disputes by a *covenant*, an arrangement by which one party comes to terms, makes a compromise, with the other, was far more popular among the Scandinavians than among the other barbarians.

In the present day the same tendency is shown by the use of a system of *conciliation*, by means of which nine out of ten disputes are amicably settled. The conciliation court is formed of two private men elected by the people, and of one man of eminence, who is appointed by the king and can be called on to resign only by a royal decision.

2. The Norwegians opposed all interventions of superior force, by which attempts were made to impose a government upon them, by simply pursuing their independent life, by continuing to act as before, and leaving the government to fall flat from want of support and from want of co-operation.

In the past we know how the pirate chiefs, who tried to make themselves royal potentates in Norway itself, found themselves face to face with their empty claims : nothing happened. Only two counties have been known to exist in Norway, those of Laurvik and Jarlsberg, and one barony, that of Rosendal. Furthermore, these attempts at feudalism were of no political import. During the time when a king was recognised by the nation, from the ninth to the fourteenth century, the royal government had chiefly to do with foreign

affairs, contended with pirates, and if it sometimes increased the safety of the interior by certain measures, it did not interfere with the independence of the peasant. When a foreign king occupied the throne, the people preserved the fundamental element of their constitution in their homes, just as the Saxons did in England, as we shall see, when they were under foreign rule.

At the present time[1] the Swedish king is only nominally king of Norway, an arrangement that was made by the Powers in 1814 merely for diplomatic reasons and in order to combine the nations. Norway is in reality a republic, and at the outset it insisted on safeguards against the royal power.

3. The Norwegians have further shown themselves very cautious in the formation of a central power emanating from the people themselves. In their eyes, so-called public interests are, without exception, subordinate to private and local interests.

They remained for a long time *in the past* without even an elective government; at first they had no assembly at all. Their first assemblies only represented districts: they were four in number. But instead of going to attend them in person, according to the law, they used, for the most part, to send delegates to represent them.

At the present time the central assembly, the "Storthing," cannot sit for more than two months. Its ordinary work consists in granting the royal administration the right to undertake certain works for the public service which local authorities are incapable of initiating, and afterwards in withdrawing that right as soon as the local authorities have benefited by the example and are capable of undertaking the works themselves. That is what happened, among other things, in the still recent case of the construction of the public roads.

"A law of September 16, 1851, took away from the Government the power of constructing roads and of imposing the taxes necessary for the purpose without the vote of the Storthing; it also deprived the magistrates of that power in favour of the municipal councils which were formed in each 'commune,' according to the law on councils of the year 1837, and nominated by the citizens who had the right to vote. . . . It was after the

[1] Since this was written the Union of Norway and Sweden under one king has been dissolved (1905).—TRANSLATOR.

law of 1851 on roads and bridges had transferred the power of imposing taxes for the construction of roads from the Government to the Storthing and from the magistrates to the municipal councils, that an improvement was observed in the means of communication. So it was obvious that it was far better and more advantageous that the people should impose their own taxes." [1]

We know what efforts Norway is making at the present time to reassume in a measure the management of its international affairs, by separating its consulates from those of Sweden.

4. The expansion of the race is going on and is aided by private enterprise and not by the power of the State.

In the past the small boat was the means by which individuals emigrated one by one, and gradually made small estates in all the inlets of the Scandinavian coast along the North Sea, as far as the base of the Danish peninsula and the beginning of the Saxon plain. This southern limit was also fairly near the place from which the first immigrants from Gothland, from the Danish archipelago, and also, of course, from the eastern side of Jutland, set out.

On reaching the Saxon plain, the seacoast fisherman found himself on new territory and in surroundings very different from those of the Scandinavian coast. In coming there the particularist family passed without effort to a new stage of its development. There we shall begin to see, if we proceed as we have done hitherto from like to like, and follow the smallest causes of modification, the evolutions of the powerful social type whose curious and picturesque genesis we now know.

At the present time the Americans of the Far West get the majority of their foreign recruits, who are not conveyed thither by any state organisation, from among the emigrants from Norway. Their assimilation with the Yankees seems as if pre-established. It would appear strange that the people who are apparently the least progressive in Europe should be the best suited for the most advanced posts of the United States, if the researches of Social Science had not made it clear that it is simply a case of two branches from the same stock being grafted together. No one who looks about him attentively on a visit to the Norwegian world can help being

[1] Broch, *Le Royaume de Norvège*, pp. 448, 450.

astonished to see how this little country, with its ancient traditions and primitive ways, exhibits, as compared with all the other European people, the most obvious and unquestionable points of resemblance with the social type of the newest countries of the West. But I have let slip the answer to my riddle!

CHAPTER V

THE SAXON

THE Danish peninsula to the south of Norway did not offer the seacoast fishermen a sufficient field for expansion towards the south. The narrow and unproductive shores of the north and west of Denmark, which were constantly inundated by the sea to a dangerous extent, did not favour the settlement of a people who were destined to become agriculturists. But, at any rate, the road along the coast, which was only thinly populated, was open for them.

It must not be imagined that the peninsula of Jutland was the same in the remote times of which we are speaking as it is to-day, but it must be inferred, from the geographical transformations which it undergoes at the present time, that it was subject to similar transformations in ancient times, as certain traces show. The following are some examples of natural disturbances it has undergone: "The thread of land which hems in the basin of the Lüm Fiord in Denmark has been repeatedly broken during storms," says Reclus, "notably in the years 1624, 1720, and 1760. On the 28th of November in 1825, at the time when terrible inundations caused much damage to all the low-lying coasts on the North Sea and flooded the Waterland in Holland, from Amsterdam to Alkmaar, the outer shore of the Lüm Fiord gave way under the pressure of the water, and the inland waters became joined to the sea by one of the numerous nymindes (new mouths) which have made openings for themselves on the coast of Jutland. Before the opening was made by the rupture at Agger, all the western part of the Lüm Fiord was filled with fresh water; but as the salt waves beat in from the sea, and a current was established between sea and sea, the composition of all the water in the strait became changed. Sea fish penetrated right up it in shoals,

and the amount of salt in all parts of it must have exceeded 18 per 1000 at least, since oyster beds were formed here and there." [1]

Inside the narrow strips of sand which to-day form the coast, the original coast-line is distinctly visible, penetrating with an irregular outline into the interior of the land, after the manner of fiords. The immense inland lakes that are now shut in by these long sandy bands are ancient gulfs of salt water, which the water brought down by rivers as well as the rain have changed into fresh-water basins, and which are gradually being filled up by alluvial soil. They are already quite shallow, and some of them even have muddy bottoms, which are submerged or dry, according to the seasons and the weather; however, there are still navigable channels, narrow dikes, which wind along in the midst of muddy shoals, which enable small vessels to get about. Some islands have become part of the mainland. There are some villages inland which bear names ending in " oe " (islands), indicating their ancient insular character.[2]

Though this region is pierced by arms of the sea, yet it is very different from Norway; above all, because it affords fewer opportunities for farming and for the cultivation of small estates. However, it formed a passage, an open door, for the seacoast fishermen. It often happens that there are vast stretches of land bordering on the territory of expanding races, over which they could not spread with advantage but which they could cross with ease and rapidity, in order to gain more propitious lands beyond.

The seacoast fishermen of Norway would naturally cross to Jutland by the great sea passage of the Skager Rak, which is entirely free of reefs and is partially sheltered from the most dangerous winds by the high land of Southern Norway.[3] The fiords—or, more correctly, the straits—which formerly crossed the peninsula from side to side and from top to bottom, and were broader than they are now, open into the Skager Rak, which washes the northern shores of Denmark. The fish of the North Sea came there in great numbers, though they were not so abundant as in Norway, and still continue

[1] Reclus, *L'Europe scandinave et russe*, p. 10.
[2] *Ibid.* pp. 8, 11. [3] *Ibid.* p. 12.

to flock into all the openings that are left or that become formed in the strip of sand that now represents the coast-line.

The present state of things, as Reclus describes it, gives a fairly good idea of what the land was like in ancient times: "The Lüm Fiord," he says (the great fiord of Denmark, which most of the other fiords join), "is an inland lake and at the same time an arm of the sea. *It crosses the whole peninsula of Jutland from side to side*, and is formed of distinct parts, which together cover an *area of* 450 *square miles*. On the west it is a vast inland lake (formerly a fiord) hemmed in by the seacoast, *a narrow thread of sand, which trembles at the shock of the waves* and which is less than half a mile in breadth in several parts. At its eastern extremity there is a narrow canal connecting it with a labyrinth of *lakes abounding in fish*, which surround *the large island of Mors and a whole archipelago of islets*, and which then unite in an *inland sea of more than* 180 *square miles, separated from the Skager Rak by a mere thread of sand-hills, and ramifying for a long distance towards the south in gulfs and bays*." [1]

This, then, is the passage, though it had very different openings in those days, which would have seemed to the Norwegians the most eminently practicable for travelling south. It was suitable for their means of transport, the small boat, and offered them seacoast fishing, a means of living much valued by them.

So we now have a knowledge of the coast of Denmark as well as of that of Norway, as regards the points which have most to do with our investigation concerning the propagation of the particularist type of society.

South of the Danish peninsula, beyond the Elbe, the aspect of the land changes. We come to the Saxon plain. The sea is still the North Sea; the land is still poor—nothing but a moor by the sea. But the waters withdraw, so to speak, from the middle of the land—they no longer penetrate so far into it—and the low-lying lands on the coast expand, widen, and curve out, forming a vast gulf in the mainland.

So, back with the sea, and room for the land! That is the great change. Though the land is by nature really the same

[1] Reclus, *L'Europe scandinave et russe*, p. 9.

in some ways as that of the western slope of Denmark, yet it differs in so far as it is less broken up by the sea and is more extensive.

Here, in the low plains of the Weser and the Ems, between the Elbe and the Bourtanger Moor, now the frontier of Holland, the movement will take place which will make the seacoast fishermen turn away from the sea into the interior of the mainland.

The locality is well adapted to bring about this transformation. The following passage from Reclus reveals its main characteristic: "To the east of the Ems there are several moors which cover thousands of acres at one stretch: Saterland, and the country of Arenberg, which occupy a large part of the triangular space in Oldenburg and Hanover, formed by the course of the Ems and the Leda, are much more extensive than many a German principality. To the east of the Weser, the river Hamme traverses one of these marshy regions, certainly one of the most remarkable in Europe, for the soil, though it has been already brought under cultivation, still floats in a spongy mass on the surface of the water in several places. At the time of the melting of the snows, when the Hamme and the many lakes formed along its course are full, all the low lands of the neighbourhood are swollen by the floods; but while the firmer lands allow themselves to be covered by the rising waters, others become detached from the beds upon which they had foundered like ships, and rise little by little, lifting the trees and the crops upon their surface. After prolonged cultivation the balance of these light lands is disturbed, and they settle down permanently on the bottom of the marsh. To the north of the marshy lands lies the region of the *geest*, or *gast*, where the soil is ordinarily composed of thick layers of sand covering clay and chalk. As a whole, the land of the geest has a very uneven surface, and in places appears almost mountainous to those that live among the marshes or on the coast; but several of the hollows have been filled up with peat. In places where rivers have hollowed out broad valleys for themselves, and washed away the upper layer of sand from the geest, the clay and chalk that the stream has laid bare form a good and fertile soil, rendered all the more productive because it is mixed

with soil brought down from a distance by the streams. In other parts the different kinds of soil are so near together that the labourer can easily mix them so as to form a good soil for agriculture.

"To the east of the great Hanoverian plain, the moors of Luneburg are merely the continuation of the region of the geest in an easterly direction. They form one of the least picturesque districts of Germany—one of those places that is always spoken of with irony, though it too has its beauties, its pink flowers, its little clumps of trees, its ravines, its boundless horizon.

"During the period which has elapsed since the fights between the Romans and the Germans, the outline of the coast of Germany on the North Sea has very much changed. That immense stretch of land reclaimed from the sea, which forms the whole of the region of Hanover to the north of Hesse and the Harz, has been nibbled away at the coast, and the ocean has regained a portion of its empire, and has advanced a good distance into the land. The annals of the Middle Ages relate the terrible disasters caused by the sudden irruptions of the sea. But though the sea besets the land, yet, on the other hand, natural causes are at work to increase man's domain at the expense of the ocean and to give him excellent alluvial lands with an average depth of 32 to 39 feet. In all the places where fresh water mingles with salt water—that is to say, in the estuaries of the Ems and the Weser, as well as in the mouths of the small rivers in that region—particles of earth suspended in the water are deposited as soon as the flow and ebb tides become equalised. Not only are the fine molecules of sand and clay precipitated, but the sea-water also undergoes a chemical change: there is a mixture of salts of chalk and magnesia in the deposit at the bottom. Furthermore, innumerable infusoria from the fresh water, which die upon coming into contact with salt water, and myriads of marine organisms, which fresh water kills, accumulate in compressed strata at the bottom of the beds of estuaries, and contribute to the formation of such fertile lands that the agriculturist, once he has won them from the sea, can find no end to their productive powers: they yield harvest upon harvest for a century without needing any reparation for their losses. When the banks of mud begin to emerge, they

are first covered with a growth of saltwort; then, as they get less salt, a species of Carex spreads over them; and soon after, creeping clover appears on the soil: then is the time for man to take possession of these new shores; they will amply repay his labour.

"Formerly, when the inhabitants of the *geest* went down to take possession of the lowlands, they took care to make their homes on ancient islands above the marsh floods, or to make for themselves artificial mounds large enough to provide space for their houses and their barns and for a home for their cattle. Each family, which might at the time of the floods be compared to a group of persons who had suffered shipwreck, thus dwelt on a solitary mound which had to be fortified with great care every year to secure it against being swept away by the sea. A great deal of debris left by the men of the Stone Age has been found on these mounds." [1]

It is easy to imagine the seacoast fishermen spreading over this district making their small estates, just as Tacitus has described them: "They live in isolated and scattered dwellings, which they erect wherever a spring or field or wood takes their fancy. *Colunt discreti ac diversi, ut fons, ut campus, ut nemus placuit.*" [2]

It was an easy land to occupy; it was almost without inhabitants.

Moreover, in the first place, it was sharply divided from the Baltic plain, which we described in connection with the German origin of the Goths.[3] In fact, the lower Elbe is diverted to the north by an immense sand-hill, which is a boundary of the Baltic plain. To the east of the great elbow formed by the Elbe, the beautiful lakes of the Spree end in the so-called marshes of Anhalt. To the south the range of the Harz Mountains, which rise above the marshes, is prolonged by a series of slopes as far as the Rhine, near the Sieg, opposite Bonn. On the west the Rhine and the Yssel serve as dikes; and from the Yssel to the Ems the Boutanger Moors complete its boundaries.

Only the wreck of the tribes which formed part of the first great Germanic invasion, and which the actual conditions of the

[1] Reclus, *L'Europe centrale*, pp. 724–730.
[2] *Germania*, xvi. [3] See above, pp. 4, 5.

place caused to degenerate, found their way to and settled in this country, which was, as we have seen, naturally poor, and shut in on all sides.

In the description Tacitus gives of the Cherusci and the Fosi, who were driven into the eastern corner of the Saxon plain towards the great bend in the Elbe, we see their type. "The Cherusci," he says, "who were left quite undisturbed, became enervated by maintaining peace for a long time at all costs. So much so that they became stigmatised as lazy and stupid, though they had formerly been called good and honest Cherusci. *Cherusci nimiam et marcescentem diu pacem illacessiti nutrierunt. Ita qui olim boni aequique Cherusci, nunc inertes ac stulti vocantur.*" [1]

We can understand how easy it was for our Scandinavian emigrants, who had sprung from a great race of peasants, and who were, besides, skilled in seacoast fishing, to crush such inhabitants. An old northern legend represents the seacoast fishers as settling discreetly on the coast of the Saxon plain, and continuing their fishing there. The indigenous folk suffered them to stay, and made no difficulties, merely bidding them not to take possession of the land. The relations between them were so friendly that on a feast day one of the local chiefs wished to give the foreigners a present. They asked for a handful of earth as their sole desire. It was willingly granted. But the next day the handful of earth was scattered about far and wide, and the seacoast fishers claimed the right to defend with their arms the whole area which it had covered.

The legend is significant.

Side by side with the portrait of the Cherusci, Tacitus gives that of the Chauci or Cauchi, which represents the particularist type admirably. These Chauci have all the Saxon characteristics. It may be that they share the name in some degree: there is not a great difference between Chauci and Saxi or Saxones. However, that is of little importance, as nothing is more variable than the names of tribes. Did not the Romans give the name of Germans to tribes that had never called themselves by that name? Do not the French give the name of "*Allemands*" to people who call themselves "*Deutschen*"? In any case, history passes from the Chauci to the Saxons

[1] *Germania*, xxxvi.

without notifying the change from the one to the other. The Saxons seem to have received their name from the stone knives (in old Saxon, *sahs*; in Latin, *saxum*) which they used in fighting. We have mentioned that the Norwegians used that weapon later than the other peoples of the west.[1] But, to pass over these details, however significant they may be, we cannot find anything more striking, more extraordinary, more enlightening than this sudden appearance of the pure particularist type in Tacitus' *Germany*, placed as it is as a complete and hitherto inexplicable contrast with all the other types of Germans there described.

"So far," says Tacitus (who, in his description, has followed the course of the Rhine as far as Lake Flevo, the Zuider Zee of to-day), "we have reconnoitred the west of Germany, but here the country makes a great curve to the north. In that very place dwells the tribe of the Chauci, whose territory, although it starts from the land of the Frisii (now Friesland), and occupies part of the coast, also extends into the interior towards the territory of the tribes (of the Rhine) which I have just described, and penetrates as far as the land of the Chatti (now Hesse). The Chauci not merely have dominion over this enormous stretch of land, but fill it. They are the finest of all the German tribes, and strive more than the rest to found their greatness upon equity. A passionless, firm, and quiet people, they live a solitary life, and do not stir up wars or ruin the country by plunder and theft. They give this excellent proof of their worth and power, that they never heap insults upon their chiefs in order to force them into action. And yet they are always ready to a man to take up arms or even form an army, if the case demands it. They have plenty of men and horses. Their fame is equally great in times of peace." [2]

I could not put this superb sketch of the great painter before the reader bit by bit, but in order to comment on it I must take it sentence by sentence. "The Chauci not only have dominion over this enormous stretch of land," says the historian, who is speaking of a country he has actually seen, "but they fill it"—*tam immensum terrarum spatium non tenent tantum Chauci; sed et implent.* Is not this exactly the impression which modern travellers receive on seeing the vast country

[1] Broch, *Le Royaume de Norvège.* [2] *Germania*, xxxv.

fields of England and America, with dwellings sprinkled on all sides, and without any deserted regions, in contrast with those empty stretches of land where Tacitus pictures the German communities as ceaselessly shifting their farms ? [1]

" They are the finest of all the German tribes, and strive more than the rest to found their greatness upon equity." What a vigorous expression of that spirit of individual dignity, of that feeling for the rights of every one, which is the characteristic of all the particularist races !

" A passionless, firm, and quiet people, they live a solitary life, and do not stir up wars nor harass the country by plunder and theft." A portrait almost identical with that which Montesquieu drew of the English, and Ampère of the Norwegians ! " If I were to be asked," says Montesquieu, " what is the predilection of the English, I should find it very hard to say ; not war, nor birth, nor honours, nor success in love, nor the charms of ministerial favour. They want men to be men. They value only two things—wealth and worth." [2] Beside Montesquieu's bold outline place this medallion of Ampère's : " The first people I saw upon landing were three sailors, whose fair hair, light blue eyes, white skin, massive frames, slow, stiff gestures, and imperturbable coolness, afforded me a striking example of the Scandinavian type. They carried my luggage to the inn and fixed their charge at fifteen shillings. This demand was very moderate, as a shilling is worth rather less than a halfpenny, but to me it seemed exorbitant, as I had no clear idea of the value of money in that country, and could only think of English shillings, and I began by getting angry. As I stormed in German, they didn't the least understand why I was in a rage, heard me to the end, and then quietly reiterated their demand. At last a servant belonging to the place, who knew a little German, and, for lack of a better, served as interpreter, put an end to the misunderstanding. They did not show any signs of triumph at being in the right, but received what they had demanded, and went off quietly, as if there had been no dispute between us." [3]

To return to the Chauci of Tacitus : " They give this excellent proof of their worth and power, that they never heap insults

[1] *Germania*, xxvi.
[2] *Pensées diverses.*
[3] *Esquisses du Nord*, pp. 6, 7.

upon their chiefs in order to force them to action." This surely is an example of self-restraint that is not German, and is thoroughly Anglo-Saxon. It is evident that there is no question of clans among that race.

"And yet they are always ready to a man to take up arms, and even to form an army, if the case demands it": "Si res poscat"—"if the affair is worth the trouble." These are matter-of-fact people. No vainglory, no wars to pass away the time as with the Germans!

"They have plenty of men and horses. Their fame is equally great in times of peace." And what do they do in times of peace with so many horses and men, so as to give scope to their energy, check their passions, and prevent themselves becoming lazy and stupid, like the Cherusci? It is clear that they are all employed in agriculture. If they merely grazed and rode their horses, they would be poor, idle, and combative in that unfertile steppe. In that case they would scour the plain, but would not fill it.

It must be confessed that in this sketch the Chauci stand out in strange relief against all the German types that fill Tacitus' pictures.

In order to heighten the contrast, I will content myself by quoting from the author's general remarks on Germany: "If the city in which they are born languishes in the ease which is the accompaniment of a long peace, the greater number of young men of noble birth go and offer themselves to foreign tribes who are at war; for inaction is insupportable to these people, and besides, it is easier for them to win renown amid dangers, and a chief cannot get a large following except by displaying his strength in war. A war-horse, a Frankish lance bloodstained in a victorious fight, these are the gifts to be looked for from the liberality of a chief. His frequent and sumptuous repasts, though somewhat coarsely prepared, take the place of payment; war and plunder furnish the means of his munificence. It would not be easy to persuade them that it would be better to plough the land and await the results for a year, than to stir up enemies and get wounds; it seems to them idle and lazy to heap up by the sweat of the brow what can be won by bloodshed. They pass much of the time, when they are not at war, in hunting, but the greater part in sloth,

in eating to excess, and in sleeping. The most valiant and warlike among them are lazy, and leave the care of the house, the protection of the household gods (penates), and the cultivation of the fields to the women, the old men, and the most feeble members of the family, and themselves stagnate in idleness. It is a strange contradiction of Nature that she should make the very men who so much like idleness, hate quiet ! " [1]

There is no need to dwell on the opposition between these two social types.

We must now proceed to find out what transformation the seacoast fisherman probably underwent when he exchanged the fiords of Norway for the Saxon plain. When he left the sea and the means of living it provided, and became dependent on the resources of the land, did he not see the society which he had so successfully remodelled revert to its original form ? Was not his system of life, planned as it was to respond to the demands of the seacoast, and dependent on the aid of the small boat, going to be thrown out of gear and " fall into the water," as the French would appropriately say ?

Certainly not, and we were convinced of it beforehand ! We knew from our previous observations that even on the seacoast, and while he still had his little boat, the seacoast fisherman instinctively founded the home of his choice, the source of his greatest ability, his complete and absolute independence, the matured power of the particularist family, upon the estate.

Therefore he had no crisis to face when he quitted his boat and plunged into the interior of the land ; he simply fell back upon the estate. It is interesting to see how closely connected the facts are that we are reviewing.

There can be no doubt that the seacoast fisherman is going to forsake the small boat for the estate, now that he is face to face with a wide stretch of land and a shore that spreads out into the interior, for that is practically what he did before, though in a less obvious manner, on the narrow shores of Scandinavia with his little wherry close at hand.

It must not be imagined that the Saxon plain could not have provided fishing as a means of living. It is bounded by two rivers : the Elbe, with its tributary the Saale, and the Ems ; a third passes through its centre from one end to the other,

[1] *Germania*, xiv., xv.

the Weser. Numberless rivers and streams have their sources there. Salt and fresh water fish, especially salmon, abound in all these streams which flow into the North Sea, forming roads, as it were, by which the fish come to feed the mainland.

But small farming is the chief means of living, and in many places the only or almost the only one. Of all the methods of land cultivation, it alone can be managed by ordinary particularist families, because of the small number of hands available, and because individual households strive to maintain their independence by each having their own separate estate. Moreover, the soil is poor, and it yields better results under the constant care of the small farmer.

The following very interesting habit, which the race developed not long after it became anti-communal, shows to what an extent the small estate, the separate homestead for each household, was an inherent part of its social system. As the races which the Saxons met in the Saxon plain were inferior to themselves — of the Cheruscian type — they soon started the practice of keeping slaves. Now they organised the life of these slaves after the model of their own. They made them live household by household in separate dwellings, demanding from them as their sole duty a certain amount of agricultural or industrial work; they had no personal services to perform; they had to produce so much corn, so many heads of cattle, so much woven cloth, so many finished garments.

Tacitus contrasts this arrangement with the Roman system, which was to group numbers of slaves together in a single *familia*, a single gang in a single cabin, and to employ them, according to the system of the division of labour, for different services, which all had to do with one and the same thing. "*Servis non in nostrum morem descriptis per familiam ministeriis, utuntur. Suam quisque sedem, suos penates regit.*"[1] Mark this well: each slave has self-government in his homestead, in his own home: "*suam quisque sedem, suos penates regit.*" We can almost feel the effort that master of language, Tacitus, made to translate those words into Latin from the Saxon. "*Frumenti modum dominus, aut pecoris, aut vestis, ut colono, injungit: et servus hactenus paret*"—that is to say, that the slave's task was limited to that.

[1] *Germania*, XXV.

He was a serf attached to the soil; that seems to be very clear. Tacitus saw him, and he grasped the whole point in which he differed from the rural Roman slave: "*non in nostrum morem!*"

So much for the system of organisation applied to the industrial arts and the arts for obtaining food among the Saxons.

Now for the means of transport which they employed.

On dry land there was no further need of small boats. Travelling had to be done on foot or on horseback. The horse figured in the description of the Chauci we quoted above: "they have plenty of men and horses." The horse, then, was the means of transport; it was used far more for agriculture than for war. It simply did the duty of a small boat in the case of a man whom a small estate furnished with everything and rendered independent: he used the horse to help him out of difficulties, and not to give chase to other people.

But Tacitus points out a peculiar phenomenon. The men and horses, ordinarily "quiet and solitary" in each estate, held themselves all ready to combine, "even to form an army, if the case demanded it." That was one of the causes of communication, and those were the means. However, almost all communications were easily made, since, "on that enormous expanse of land," men lived so near together that they filled it.

Here we touch upon the question of the organisation of public life. But we are obliged to recognise that such cases of union have rather the character of free association than of public life.

That was apparently the only instance of co-operation between one estate and another, and it had a very peculiar character: it was limited to one special occasion. Since each individual was entirely independent and isolated in his own home, he only co-operated with others for the purpose of defence or when it was absolutely necessary; beyond that, he kept his arms in readiness, that was all: "*prompta omnibus arma, et, si res poscat, exercitus.*"

A second no less honourable characteristic was revealed in this co-operation: the manner in which each individual turned to it voluntarily and gave his help deliberately.

These two characteristics of co-operation—namely, its adoption for a special purpose, and its voluntary nature—are still found in the Saxon plain. They are also characteristic of

English communes. The communal association, whether public or private, among the Saxons and English, is merely a collection of individuals, each contributing his own special, distinct, and separate services, organised in his own way, according to his peculiar needs, and with a special staff.[1]

What a contrast to the patriarchal commune, the Russian commune, for instance, which begins by swallowing up everybody compulsorily, monopolising every kind of business that may arise: a general and compulsory partnership! The French commune is of the same kind: a commune is established *a priori* which will undertake, without distinction, to look after all the communal interests, with the same organisation and the same staff.

It is easy to see how these two different types of communes originated. The patriarchal commune proceeded from the communal family, which provided everything for everybody. The particularist commune proceeded from the estate, which was self-sufficient; which was isolated and independent; which was not brought into associations except for special, very limited purposes, so that its independence might be infringed to the least possible extent; which remained the supreme guarantee for life, and which was the condition, *sine quâ non*, of the public constitution. Without independence no particularist family can exist.

Further, it is easy to understand how particularist societies came to organise public authorities and public life in turn, in such a way that they were essentially subordinate to private and individual independence. Their very life depended on that.

In the above system of public associations which are formed for special objects and kept distinct, it is also easy to distinguish two features characteristic of public life among particularist families; they are: (1) the division of power, a principle but ill understood in France, I may mention, owing to a mistake of Montesquieu's; (2) the flexibility of public institutions—that is to say, the quality which enables them to alter their form of government easily, without revolutions and violent collisions, and without destroying or renewing their established base. But our business here is merely to state these

[1] See Le Play, *Les Ouvriers européens*, vol. iii. p. 141, etc.; *Constitution de l'Angleterre*, vol. ii. p. 9, etc.

things as summarily as possible, and to grasp in the clearest way their starting-point, their original cause and governing reason.

After the question of public life comes the question of the expansion of the race.

When travelling could only be done on foot or on horseback, the expansion of the race was as gradual as when the small boat was the means of transport; this would account for the very gradual manner in which the Saxon plain became filled to the brim. When Tacitus saw it, it was already well filled, and it is certain that it must soon have overflowed. And when it did, the particularist family passed to another land amid new surroundings. We shall see how it underwent a new transformation there, and what the transformation was.

Now let me draw the reader's attention to a really wonderful thing: namely, the way in which the Saxon plain completed the marvellous apparatus which produced the particularist family. I subjoin a summary of the apparatus; it has already been described in part:

A *funnel*, the Baltic plain, to receive the patriarchal family in the beginning.

At the end of the funnel a *small tube*, the narrow south-eastern slope of Denmark, to introduce the patriarchal family into the Scandinavian islands.

The Scandinavian islands (including Scania) performing the office of *closed vessels*, retorts, to imprison the patriarchal family.

Two *agents* to bring the patriarchal family in the closed vessels *to the highest pitch of tension* in such a way as to disengage the *loose molecules*, under the pressure.

These two agents are: first—in the interior of the retort—*the fertile lands*; second—surrounding the retort—*the great commercial caravan leaders.*

Under this double action, the extreme tension of the community and the disengagement of loose molecules, *individual emigrants* are produced.

The *short neck* of the retort, Kattegat, introduces them into the *worm* of the still—namely, the fiords of Norway and Western Denmark.

Into this *worm* the particularist families with their small estates percolate from place to place and *drop by drop.*

The *distillation* of single households from the patriarchal family is accomplished.

But above the *worm* opens the Saxon plain, the *great receptacle*, where the particularist families congregate on leaving the *worm*, and which is destined to bring them back *in a body* to the interior of the continent.

Moreover, the receptacle is situated at *the very place from which they set out as patriarchal families*—that is to say, at the extremity of the Baltic plain.

It was in this way that, *by passing through the Scandinavian still*, the *real Germanic invasion* was carried on and taken up again at the same point, that invasion which is the true glory of the Germans, which has distinguished them from among all the nations of the world, because it was responsible for introducing into Europe a form of society superior to that of the Romans: the particularist family, in the place of the patriarchal; the estate, instead of communal lands; and the system of "gentes and clients"—in short, the subordination of public to private life.

All those tribes who took part in the Germanic invasion but did not pass through the Scandinavian "still" from end to end, and who spread into Europe straight from the Baltic plain, as we saw, merely flowed over the soil of the Roman Empire like a passing torrent, bringing destruction with it: they founded nothing destined to last. It was a sort of Celtic invasion. I mentioned the Ostrogoths, Visigoths, Vandals, Burgundians, Heruli, Rugii, Suevi, and Lombards. The last named, however, were distinguished by the peculiar importance acquired by the Lombard Empire; they were the most akin to the Western Scandinavians.

None of these German tribes were of any lasting political importance, or took the lead in Europe from century to century.

One after the other, they went down from the shores of the Baltic straight to the Danube; there they were turned back by the current of the Huns, the Alans, and the Avars—that is to say, the tribes coming up from the east—and ascended the upper Danube to spread out over the south-west, in Italy, Gaul, Spain, Africa even, where they fell one upon the other and perished, after having terrorised the Roman world.

Those German tribes are nothing more than a vast layer of a kind of Celtic civilisation, covering the ruins of the Roman Empire.

But following upon those Germans, there descended upon Europe in their turn the Germans who had made the round by Eastern and Western Scandinavia, and had re-entered the continent by the Saxon plain. It was they who organised Europe : their influence will be clearly shown at every point as we go along.

Thus the incomparable importance of the part played by the Germans, a rôle of which historians have an instinctive perception, is very clearly explained by the fact that the transformation of the patriarchal into the particularist family took place in their race. That is the basis, though hitherto people have hardly explained it to themselves, of their extraordinary fame, a fame, moreover, that is well deserved. Writers on the origin of the Germans, on German institutions, all make mistakes, get their ideas confused, because they have not unravelled this fundamental point, and have constantly mixed up the elements derived from the first Germans—namely, those who came from the Baltic plain with patriarchal families—with the elements derived from the Germans of the Saxon plain with particularist families.

Only the latter can boast the merit of having introduced to the world a social organisation superior to that of the Romans.

The two adversaries worthy to remain the most famous in history, the Romans and the second group of Germans, actually encountered one another in that strange war in Germany which took place entirely on the confines of the Saxon plain, and was waged incessantly on the same spot for more than five centuries.

The duration of the war is inexplicable, as is the tenacity with which it clung to so miserable a part of the world ; and the immense results which the final triumph of the Germans brought are inexplicable without the explanation we have just given of it.

The part the Saxon plain played was to reintroduce into the heart of the continent of Europe the Germans that had been *transformed* in Scandinavia ; it was, as it were, the *alluvial point* whither they were washed, the land where they became focussed, the land from which they radiated. There the sea-coast fisherman spurned his small boat with his foot, and turned to make his way into the interior of the country. We shall now see what road he took.

CHAPTER VI

THE FRANK

PART I

WE were struck by the tranquillity in which, according to Tacitus' evidence, the tribes dwelled "who filled" the Saxon plain.

It is worth noting that the Roman expeditions in the north of Germany, which made so much noise in the world, only followed the edge of that plain, and did not penetrate far into it. They went along at the foot of the mountains which bound it on the south. Their route is distinctly marked by the three most memorable events of that bloody war. It was at the foot of Teutberg (or Teutoburger Wald), just where the Ems has its source, that Varus lost his legions. At the place where the Weser leaves the mountains of Hesse to widen out in the plain, in the fields of Idistavisus, not far from Minden, Germanicus won his name by the defeat of Arminius. It was opposite the last spurs of the Harz Mountains, where the Elbe and the Saale meet, near Magdeburg, that the Roman arms were finally checked.[1] Though they went all along that line of mountain slopes bordering on the Saxon plain, the Romans did not come into conflict with the Saxons.

What kept the people of the Saxon plain so quiet was their independent and laborious life on their small estates. Their labour had become heavier since they had buried themselves in the heart of the country, where they were far from seacoast fishing: they were obliged to lend their emigrants assistance. The latter, in fact, had nothing but an estate of their own to live upon when they left their family. Now an agricultural estate is not like a fishery, which is ready from one day to the

[1] See *Atlas*, Vidal-Lablache, pp. 94, 95.

next to provide a man with food. Therefore the particularist family had to develop a characteristic which was unknown to it when it lived on the seacoast. In Norway seacoast fishing had shown the would-be emigrants the means for acquiring the liberty they desired; but in the Saxon plain the family was obliged to think of a means of getting them off its hands. To keep them was no longer possible; the great framework of the patriarchal family, with its hosts of relations, capable of embodying and dominating every kind of nature, was shattered; there was nothing for it but to accommodate their ways to that inevitable independence.

The family, then, had of necessity to supply the place of the seacoast fishing by assisting temporarily in starting the emigrants in life. The family took trouble to equip them beforehand, so that they would be able to overcome difficulties without any outside help; and, when the moment came, provided them with the things that were first needed in making a new home.

How did they manage that? It is not difficult to conceive it. The family went about from place to place to obtain a piece of unoccupied land, which they did by continually extending the frontiers of the country. This they cleared, or rather, improved, by making up the soil in the way we have described, by bringing sand from here and clay from there, by draining one piece and bringing water to another; then they sowed and reaped. The prospective emigrant would, of course, give up more time to it than the rest. Little by little, with the help of his family, he would build himself a sort of Robinson Crusoe house, where he could go and live. One day, when he had had enough of his family, or they had had enough of him, he would betake himself to it for good. The Saxon plain had been increased by one more estate.

That is the way in which the family intervened to make up for the loss of seacoast fishing.

This family help is the first form of that dowry granted to emigrants, and of that family care to make them ready for emigration, that we meet with in the Saxon and Anglo-Saxon races of the modern type.

Turning to a recent monograph, the *Life of Father Hecker*, I will take at hazard one out of thousands or tens of thousands

of pieces of evidence that show how the particularist emigrants have spread and perpetuated this custom throughout the world. It runs as follows :

" Towards the end of the eighteenth century, a German clockmaker—an ancestor of P. Hecker—Engel Freund, in company with his wife and children, left his native town of Elberfeld (Saxon plain) to seek a new fatherland in America. His wife, Elizabeth Schneider, was born in 1764 at Frankenburg (also in Saxon country, one of Charlemagne's places of residence in ancient days, near Aix-la-Chapelle). She had one son and several daughters. They all settled in New York. When his daughters got married, Engel Freund, then at the height of his prosperity in trade, *gave them each a house in the neighbourhood for their dowry, in order*, he said, *to perpetuate in that way the good customs of the mother country in a foreign land.*" [1]

One consequence of the labour imposed upon the particularist family, with a view to the establishment of each of its emigrants, is worth noting : it absolutely prevented the enlargement of the small estate. When everyone is busy working for the emigrant, there is no time to enlarge the family estate. This is the explanation of the permanence of this kind of small estate. The race expands continuously, without a pause, and even to excess, but it expands by means of small estates, not by the enlargement of the original estates. The small estate does not augment, but it gives birth to a quantity of others like itself.

It is a very curious piece of mechanism, and its effect can be seen at a glance in all the particularist countries where there is a patchwork of small estates that are permanent, but continually multiplying. The same movement is still going on in the far west of America. It had its origin in the Saxon plain.

Nay, more, emigration still goes on at the present time from the Saxon plain to the far west. " Young Saxon agriculturists," says Le Play, " who do not find an opportunity of devoting themselves to the development of one of these estates at home, usually decide *to emigrate to North America with a sum of money advanced to them by their parents.* They very seldom decide to go into industrial workshops as apprentices. Repugnance towards manufacturing work is a dominant character-

[1] *Vie du Père Hecker*, pp. 1, 2.

istic of all the peasant races which cultivate the vast Saxon plain between the Elbe and the Rhine. . . . Emigration is established on a regular basis everywhere in the rural districts, and has the character of a national institution. The offshoots from the family stock who cannot set up new establishments, or find work in a country where the land is fully occupied, have hit upon the only solution which could enable the social organisation of the country to continue at the same level. Instead of deferring the difficulty by using insufficient palliatives, and instead of subdividing the land into small plots, which would soon have reduced the families to a uniform level of misery, the peasants of those districts, whether tenants or proprietors, organised, of their own accord, a system of emigration which regularly drafts off the superfluity of the population to North America." [1]

We now understand why the German Chauci, whom Tacitus describes as nearly filling the Saxon plain, were so busy in times of peace and so reluctant to engage in war.

But we can also understand that the first condition necessary to enable the family to succeed, was that the unoccupied land should represent the largest part of the emigrant's capital at the moment of his independent start in life. *The free land, the virgin soil, was the emigrant's main stand-by ; the help given by his family merely supplemented it.* We saw how the first step the family took towards setting up the emigrant was to seek an unoccupied piece of land. If the family had been obliged to buy an estate for each of its sons, it would certainly not have been equal to it; in most cases it could not have provided even for one of its sons.

This is another reason why the races with particularist families were obliged to find new lands. That is the very simple secret of the constant invasion of new countries by the Saxons and Anglo-Saxons. It was a vital necessity with them. It was founded on no political calculation, no economic theory. It was a family matter pure and simple, indispensable to its existence, and executed by the family itself as a matter of course.

After a close examination of the facts, we must allow that a particularist family with a small estate could do no more for the establishment of its emigrants than what we have already repre-

[1] Le Play, *Ouvriers européens*, vol. iii. pp. 156, 192.

sented it doing in the Saxon plain, and that kept it busy enough. The family unceasingly spent its time, its forethought, its substance, its capabilities, upon this object. This kind of emigration on a small scale was essentially an emigration of individuals, one by one, a founding of small estates, one by one, wherever an empty piece of land could be found. This method of expansion has remained the characteristic of all the particularist races when they have been obliged to rely upon nothing but the resources of the peasant's family, nothing but the resources of the small estate.

One realises that their expansion was naturally of a pacific kind, since it was accomplished by single individuals!

This would account for the fact that for more than a century after Tacitus, the population of the German plain, in spite of the extraordinary qualities which the historian saw them to possess, did nothing to make a stir in the world, though everything all about them was in a terrible commotion. It is a striking fact that the Romans and Germans, in their final conflict, respected this corner of the earth and made a circuit round the Saxon plain, as if it were a country that was walled in, or some high, solitary plateau. Without the evidence of Tacitus we might almost believe that it was a desert, impassable, or still submerged beneath the waves of the North Sea. It would be impossible for us to explain things otherwise.

But whilst the peasants of the Saxon plain, by their incessant, pacific emigration of unit by unit, "insinuated themselves" (to use Tacitus' expressive phrase) even among the Chatti—that is to say, that they spread as far as the winding valleys of the mountain range of Hesse; whilst they pushed the Cherusci farther and farther back towards the marshes of the Elbe, and pressed more closely the petty German tribes who had already been driven to the banks of the Rhine—the Bructeri, the Teucteri, the Marsi, and the Chamavi—something had unexpectedly happened to the Old Germans of the Baltic plain and of Eastern Scandinavia, who had continued to live in the patriarchal style.

At this point we again come into contact with those Odinid chiefs whom we purposely described side by side with the Gothic peasants because they had a hand in directing the destinies of the particularist family. We shall now consider

the influence which that group of leaders of men with their patriarchal and urban traditions had upon this family.[1]

We have already mentioned that while the Gothic emigrants went away to the west, one by one, to seek a retired spot in the fiords of Norway where they might be independent, the rich Odinid warriors, on the contrary, thought only of reopening the road to the east, and looked out for tribes in every part of the Baltic plain which they might stir up to follow them. They were soon checked in their advance upon Asia by the Huns and the Alans, but they despatched the Ostrogoths, the Visigoths, the Gepidæ, the Vandals, the Burgundians, the Suevi, the Rugii, the Heruli, in succession across the Danube and the Rhine, the Roman frontier. This succeeded so well that before long there were none of the Old Germans left in the whole of the Baltic plain, so that war came to an end for lack of combatants. The empty land, however, was soon refilled by new-comers, but they were men speaking another language, with another form of religion and another social organisation, still nomadic, or semi-nomadic, and under the rule of patriarchs. But the Odinid warriors, who had become over-civilised, and had, moreover, been decimated by their warlike expeditions, found them too weak for recruits and too difficult to enlist. These foreigners were the Slavs or Wends.

The Odinids then turned their eyes towards the Saxon plain, which they had at first neglected, thinking it an isolated place cut off from everywhere, with a scattered, unorganised population which had no passion for war and adventure. But the inhabitants of that country began to overflow and to press upon their neighbours on every side. Then the Odinids discovered that they were of their own race, had the same language, religion, and traditions as themselves. At the same time they were no longer like the Old Germans, who were ready to enlist and would be easily stirred up to go to war or to shift their homes. We have seen with what energy the Neo-Germans of Western Scandinavia and the Saxon plain were inclined to oppose any organisation of superior authority. So the descendants of Odin and his companions found that there was no room for them in the midst of these peasants with particularist families except as private men; they might be honoured because of their illustrious

[1] See above, Ch. II. p. 14 ff.

birth and their recollections of Scandinavia, but that was all.

They formed the Saxon "Nobility" of that time, and continued as such till the conquest of Charlemagne.[1] The "bourgeois" life, little suited as it was to the temperament of the Odinids, naturally prevented much immigration on the part of the warrior chiefs. Nevertheless, they brought a new element into the peasant life, which was destined to perform a really useful part.

The useful part played by the Scandinavian warrior was that of extending the sphere and augmenting the results of Saxon emigration in a singular degree, by causing emigration in bands to take the place of emigration of solitary individuals, and by making emigration to distant regions take the place of emigration to near places.

In fact, it was essential to the nature of their social formation that they should, in direct contrast to the Saxon peasants, be engaged in acting upon others rather than upon themselves.

They had been brought up rather to take the offensive, to fight in wars of adventure and conquest, unlike the peasants, who were accustomed only to protective war, to local and defensive wars, and were, as Tacitus describes them, peace-loving, slow to take up arms, and devoid of any passion for fighting.

For organising the emigration of bands destined for distant places, the Scandinavian warrior had an instrument ready to hand, his *truste*, his large domestic following. He was no man of the people who had escaped from his community by the aid of a small boat. He was a wealthy descendant of a patriarchal family surrounded by his *devoti*, his faithful followers, after the fashion of the Celts and of the Old Germans. And, even when he had to flee from the land of his fathers with all speed, after some unsuccessful stroke, he had a large vessel upon the shore with ten banks of rowers, which carried him swiftly to the open sea. In the vessel were the pick of the *devoti*; the others awaited him on the high seas or went thither to rejoin him. This is the classical picture which the Sagas present to us.

The *truste* formed the bodyguard, the staff of officers, the administrative body which was indispensable to the Scandinavian warrior for the organisation of his band of emigrants.

[1] *La Science Sociale*, vol. ix. pp. 377–380, April 1890.

He did not enlist his band as he used to in Old Germany where he forced whole tribes, with women and children, to step out after him: in the Saxon plain he could recruit only individual volunteers from among the young emigrants who were leaving home, and then only for a definite purpose, in accordance with the system of voluntary associations for special objects.

It is a curious fact that this is one of the methods of recruiting used nowadays for the English marine service. Young men, on the lookout for an opening, enter the service by specifying the work they would like to do: one engages himself as a stoker, another as a seaman, another as an artilleryman, another as steward.

The special stipulation the young Saxon peasant made was that he should not be led to war to accomplish mighty deeds, but to amass booty, which would take the place of the family help, which would otherwise have been necessary to set him up on an estate; and further, to find a piece of land somewhere that was unoccupied or that the Odinids would clear for him.

It is easy to see how much this new form of emigration must have lightened the family's duties and helped the emigrant to independence.

It therefore became very popular among the people and extended the influence of the particularist family in the world to a wonderful degree.

Private means of transport were used for the new system of emigration: it was accomplished on foot or on horseback. But most commonly the emigrant went on foot; for he had inherited strong limbs from his family, and besides, it was hard for his parents to give up to him one of the horses used for the cultivation of the estate.

The warrior exerted the same influence upon the means of transport as the caravan leader: he converted the private means of transport into a public means.

We shall find that public authority was first constituted—and we know that hitherto there had been an extraordinary absence of it among the particularist families—as a result of this new organisation of means of transport.

The emigrant band organised in the manner we described above, constituted, properly speaking, a *tribe of Franks*. There were as many Frankish tribes as there were bands of this

kind. Frank was the generic name of all these emigrants, a name which is strong evidence of their feeling of independence; but there was perfect autonomy in each band: there were the Franks under Clodion, the Franks of the Sieg or the Sicambri, the Chamavian Franks, the Salian Franks, etc.

Besides, subject to more strict definition, the following fact may be called a law of society: that the great organisers of the means of transport, who put themselves at the head of the emigrant bands, generally constituted the first governing staff on arrival at the place of destination. Now that we know the formation of the Frankish band or tribe, let us trace its progress, and see to what extent it shows the influence of its first constitution throughout its history.

The course was well mapped out. The band was to look for booty and for land: undoubtedly the best were to be got, not in the east, where the Slavs were spreading, but in the west, among the Romans.

An exact counterpart of the Saxon plain, whose weakest frontier is formed by the Rhine, lies on the other side of the river: it is the country of Flanders, which nowadays includes the north of the Rhenish Province, Cis-Rhenian Holland, Belgium, French Flanders, and Artois. There is one difference, however: the land there is, on the whole, richer than it is in the Saxon plain, and sometimes very much more so.

The Flemish plain lies on the left of the Rhine, and is formed by the basins of the Meuse and the Escaut, just as the Saxon plain is formed by those of the Ems and the Weser.

The two plains together form a large semicircle, a sort of collar round the delta of the Rhine, of which the Zuider Zee is very nearly the centre.

But, however much their greed and daring prompted the Frankish bands to throw themselves into the Flemish plain, they were for a long time restrained by the resistance of the Romans; and, as they could not turn back towards the Saxon plain without danger of being very badly received there (which can be easily understood), they gradually congregated on the right bank of the Rhine and on the banks of its tributaries, from the Yssel to the Sieg, which flows into the Rhine opposite Bonn at the southern extremity of the Saxon plain. The

Frankish bands received their different appellations from the names of the rivers on whose banks they lived.

But space there became restricted, and they determined to go round the mountains of Hesse in order to find an outlet farther south, in the lower basin of the Main. In this way a first Frankish land was formed between the Saxon plain and the Main, and was called *Eastern France.*

The Franks continued to congregate and expand in this way, while the Roman power on the other side of the Rhine grew weaker and weaker, till at last they made a general attack, though each band worked for its own hand. This attack is known as the Frankish invasion of the beginning of the fifth century. They crossed the Rhine, this time successfully, all the way along from the Main to the Yssel.

They settled first all along the left bank. Once there, they were not slow in spreading out over the Flemish plain, which is, I have said, the counterpart of the Saxon plain on the left of the Rhine, and over the valley of the Moselle, which is also on the left of the Rhine, and is the counterpart of the valley of the Main. This was *Western France.*

The Franks must, of course, have occupied, or at any rate penetrated into the country in a far more rapid and headlong way than the Saxons did in the Saxon plain, for their method of emigrating in bands to distant places under the direction of a restless and adventurous *truste*, was necessarily far quicker than that of the Saxons, who emigrated one by one in simple peasant fashion, and only went short distances.

In this complex series of facts, which are linked so closely one to the other, we see the working of the natural mechanism of the Frankish band as if through a magnifying glass; from the details we can get a knowledge of the genesis of the Frankish race from its formation, and its departure from its Saxon farms under the leadership of the Odinid *truste*, till it settled in its first territory, Eastern France, south of the Saxon plain, and in Western France, opposite the Saxon plain, beyond the Rhine.

All this is the direct and normal result of the constitution of our band of emigrants.

Let us pause now and watch one of these bands settling in the land.

When the so-called Roman legions, which were no more than an aggregate of Old Germans, who had been conquered and subsequently admitted into the empire, had been repulsed, the band of Franks made the representative of the imperial power come to terms. An agreement was made that the warrior at the head of the Frankish band should be recognised as the representative of the emperor in the place of the man that had been defeated. The new governor was installed, after the Roman fashion, in a town that was ceded to him, together with the surrounding country, upon which he was allowed to levy taxes for his private profit. He had with him his *truste*, which had been increased on the way by those who had the taste and ability for the career it offered. The so-called Roman legions passed under his command. He received or appropriated certain large villas, certain forest lands which belonged to the imperial domain or chanced to be abandoned. The revenue from this property was added to that which came from the taxes, and he had, besides, the income from the pleasure grounds and the hunting lands.

The Frankish chief, then, with his *truste*, entered quite naturally into the situation previously occupied by the Gallo-Roman governor and his following; he was quite in his element there, except that it was not natural for him to remain long in one place without organising some new warlike expedition.

As far as the Gallo-Roman population was concerned, the difference between him and his predecessor was hardly perceptible. The former governor was singularly like the new, and the old administration like the new.

But what became of the ordinary Frank, the agricultural emigrant?

As for him, he settled outside the town, on the estate of which he had long dreamed. In the country, which had been deserted by the inhabitants with good reason during the war, it was easy to find estates, and they were often well stocked with everything. There was no need to have recourse to the eviction of those owners who were still alive, for they lived in the neighbouring town in accordance with the Roman custom. Plenty of land was unoccupied, public as well as private, quite enough for the comparatively small number of Franks.

As soon as the war was over, there was no difficulty in settling

in peacefully and speedily. The booty, the slaves taken in war, the slaves and *coloni* still living on deserted properties, were an excellent substitute for the help that the emigrant used to receive from his family upon his settlement.

The transformation which the Franks brought about in the Gallo-Roman farms and villas which they had selected for their homes and made into secure and self-sufficient homesteads, was simple enough. They found agricultural slaves in an organised band on the spot, as well as *coloni*. The former they installed in separate cabins scattered about over the land, giving into their hands the management of their own families, and imposing upon them the obligation of working a portion of the estate for them: it was, in fact, a reproduction of the Saxon or Chaucian organisation described by Tacitus. The latter, however, the colonists, were already settled in a similar way, but were free—free, at least, in name, for Roman law did not allow them to leave the estate where they were, and did not permit the proprietor to send them away. The Franks, who had a different idea of liberty, were probably not slow to confound them altogether with the slaves in their cabins, whom they looked upon as forming an integral and immutable part of their estates.

Thus the agricultural slave passed from the Roman to the Saxon system of organisation. The Romans, too, had actually settled a few slaves here and there like *coloni*, but without their liberty; but what the Saxons did indiscriminately for all their servants, the Romans only did very exceptionally for certain favourite and privileged servants. And the *colonus*, little by little, passed from his nominally free position to the rank and title of slave, or rather of serf, as he gradually came to see that the latter, under the Saxon régime, had an establishment of his own no less than he, and also derived some advantage from the fact that the master took a direct interest in him and relieved him of responsibility.

Thus it naturally came about, in a simple and easy manner, that the *system of serfdom*—that is, Saxon and Frankish slavery—was established.

But the question of the relations between the warrior chief and the ordinary Franks was the most delicate point in the settlement of the Frankish band.

Their relations could not be absolutely broken. It was indispensable to remain united from the military point of view. The new-comer was not in an empty country, as in the Saxon plain, but in an occupied land: it was necessary for him to guard his own position in the midst of Gallo-Romans. He was not in a secluded, isolated country, as in the Saxon plain, but in an open country, where fresh bands of Franks were continually arriving, who constituted separate tribes and thought it no harm to fall upon their kindred bands. The Romans also made some attempts at reconquest. Lastly, detached parties of Old Germans tried to force their way about everywhere. So the Franks, who were a practical people, made no difficulty about remaining united to their chief, *from the military point of view.*

When the chief, whose duty it was to be on the watch, thought it was necessary to take up arms, he summoned the Franks together, and they came to an arrangement among themselves that they would contribute one man at least for a given area of land; the rest offered their services if they wished. The young men took part in the expedition in the quality of emigrants. It was the Champ de Mars, but it was apparently only convoked occasionally.

The Franks who were present agreed to or rejected the expedition that was proposed to them. If it was accepted, the most perfect discipline was maintained under the command of the warrior chief.

All this went smoothly; but in other matters it was quite another story.

The warrior chief saw the Franks distributed here and there on estates in the midst of the lands of his Gallo-Roman subjects, and was very much inclined to levy the Roman land tax and the other fiscal dues, for his own profit, on all properties indiscriminately, whether they were in the hands of a Gallo-Roman or a Frank. He tried to treat the Franks in every respect as plain Roman citizens; but the Frank recognised only one thing: his absolute personal independence and the absolute independence of his estate, *his own kingdom.*

So it was not long before a struggle began, and it was kept up incessantly.

I will describe a few incidents which illustrate it:

Childeric, chief of the Salian Franks, who was the natural son of Merovig—and we are here touching upon the very first beginning—had settled on the territory of Tournay. He displeased his Franks by his behaviour in some matter unconnected with warfare. They expelled him, and he betook himself to Thuringia, where he tried, no doubt, to collect a new band of Saxon emigrants about him. As the Franks of Tournay found it necessary to have another warrior chief, they simply chose the nearest Roman general for the post, a lieutenant of Aëtius, Egidius, who had the command of the north of Gaul, and had gradually made himself independent in the country between the Somme and the Loire.

It is fairly clear from this that the Franks were very little inclined to tolerate a sovereign, and to pledge their attachment to any one whatsoever, except for the purpose of having a military commander in case of need.

But the end of the story bears most upon our subject. One of the *truste*, who had remained faithful to Childeric, had continued to live at Tournay, "in order to watch over the interests of his chief." His name was Viomad. He was clever enough to persuade Egidius *to extort some taxes from the Franks*. The result was inevitable: the Franks immediately deposed their chief, and Childeric, who had been kept informed of events by his faithful follower, was able to return among them, upon making a promise that he would be more prudent than Egidius had been in the matter of taxation.

But the Frankish kings seem to have been fated to desert the policy of prudence from time to time. The Franks, on their side, never forgot to remind them of it. The following examples afford an illustration:

On Theodobert's death, the Franks took the opportunity of showing their hatred for Parthenius, his great vassal, *because he had levied taxes upon them in the name of the aforesaid king.* Parthenius, anticipating their design, fled to Treves and hid himself in a chest in the church, whilst the Frankish bishops tried to quell the rising. But they could effect nothing. The people found their way into the church, discovered Parthenius, and stoned him to death. It was a warning to the new king and his great vassals.

Later on, "the great vassal, Audon, levied public taxes

upon a large number of Franks, *who had been exempt from them in the time of the old king Childebert.* After the king's death the Franks despoiled him of everything except what he could carry on his person. They burned his house down, and would even have taken his life had he not taken refuge in the church." [1]

M. Fustel de Coulanges, an historian who is an admirer of Roman as against Frankish institutions, to whom the above stories evidently do not convey much meaning, since he practically reduces the Frank to the condition of an ordinary taxpayer, like the Gallo-Roman, thinks better of it, though too late, and, after due reflection, adds this innocent note at the end of his chapter: "Though there is no evidence to show that the Franks were exempt from taxes (!), it is probable, at any rate, that they only paid a few." Oh yes, very few! And that is more than probable. The savant's instinct corrected his prejudices.[2]

It is as true that the warrior chief tried to impose taxes on his Franks as well as on the Gallo-Romans, as it is that the Franks would not hear of such a thing. That is the simple and obvious explanation of the facts we have just stated, and this explanation springs from the knowledge of the social system under which the Frankish bands were formed. A little Social Science does history a great deal of good, and at any rate prevents the less probable of two hypotheses from being chosen.

The Frank, then, defended the independence of his estate, *from the point of view of the land tax*, against his military chief, who was installed in the place of the Roman governor. That is our first point.

The second is this: the Frank objected to royal agents, appointed by his Romanised chief, coming into his estate and exercising any jurisdiction there; he defended the independence of his estate *in questions regarding the maintenance of law and order.*

In this point, just as before, the men belonging to the *truste* tried to advance the king's authority, and the Franks resisted unperturbed. The king yielded, and ordered his agents to

[1] *Grégoire de Tours*, iii. 36, vii. 15.

[2] Fustel de Coulanges, *Institutions politiques de l'ancienne France*, part i. p. 446.

withdraw. The landowners took care to provide themselves with a royal warrant recognising their right to shut the gates of their property against the agents, and they rid themselves of any agents that appeared by showing their warrants : " There are innumerable royal warrants of this sort. The specimens that have been preserved by churches, and have come down to us, reach a comparatively high figure. The substance is the same in all cases, the form nearly so. The letter was delivered by the king into the hands of the landowner, but was addressed to the counts and royal functionaries. If the count or his agent made his appearance at an estate to judge a case, the landowner handed him the warrant, and the count read as follows : ' It is our will that neither you nor your agents ever enter the lands of this bishop, of this abbot, or of this layman, to judge lawsuits, or receive fines, or to seize or arrest men whether bond or free.' The series of royal warrants continued under the Merovingians and the Carlovingians and even later. These ' immunity grants ' *are not the origin of the justice rendered within the estate ; they are merely the consequence of it.*" [1]

" The edict of 614, of Clotaire II., declares that : ' If men belonging to a church or a landowner are accused of crime, the agent of the church or the landowner will be required by royal functionaries to deliver them up to the court of justice, *outside the estate*, and will even be constrained thereto by force unless he has already judged, punished, and extorted a fine for the crime.' " [2]

The owner, then, acted as judge, had his own agent for judging cases on his own land and for punishing both bond and free men who lived upon it. And if he did not exercise this right which he had assumed, the king's judges claimed the criminal for trial, *but outside the estate.*

" The landowner, then, evidently became a sort of civil authority within the limits of his estate." (M. Fustel de Coulanges would have done better to say : intended to remain a civil authority.) " The men on the estate called him *Dominus*, a word which means both proprietor and master. They also called him *Senior*, a somewhat vague term in Merovingian language implying superiority and authority. In documents

[1] Fustel de Coulanges, *L'Alleu et le domaine rural*, p. 455.
[2] *Ibid.* p. 456.

we find it applied to owners of large estates even when they are plain private men or ecclesiastics. The master of the land was at the same time a lord over men. The office of Senior (*séniorat*) was not an institution that had been created by force : later on there was a military and feudal office of Senior, but *at first the office of Senior simply belonged to the landowners.*" [1] For this once, the matter cannot be better stated.

But it is not everything to state facts well : it is necessary to understand and explain them. And this is where M. Fustel de Coulanges fails.

We, on our part, have rigorously followed the sequence of facts, according to the method prescribed by Social Science, from the beginning of the formation of the particularist family, and we perceive that we are face to face with *two powers : the owner of the estate and the warrior chief.*

These two absolutely independent and naturally hostile powers were found united in the *Frankish band*—that is to say, in a *temporary organisation of public means of transport among Saxon emigrants.*

On arrival at the place of destination, the union was maintained for the purpose of military defence, which was indispensable.

On other points, unity was no longer possible. The moment the Frank set foot on his estate, the chief had to retire except in his military capacity.

But the chief found the means to set up an establishment of his own, and did so in his own way, which was different from that of the Frank. He did not install himself so much as a landowner, as a public officer, with political and administrative functions, *thanks to the Gallo-Romans and to the Roman administration which he found established on the spot.*

The chief had no difficulty in exercising this political and administrative power over the Gallo-Roman, but it was a different matter with the Frank.

There arose the struggle. The two elements of the Frankish band, which worked so well together when it was a question of means of transport, could not get on together in ordinary life : the patriarchal leader warred with the particularist family.

In the next chapter we shall see the issue of the struggle.

[1] Fustel de Coulanges, *L'Alleu et le domaine rural*, p. 458.

CHAPTER VII

THE FRANK

PART II

WE have, as it were, been present at the formation, the march, and the installation of the free bands, called "Frankish tribes," which emigrated from the Saxon plain. We know that they brought with them to the territory of the empire quite a different element from that which had been brought there so far by the tribes from beyond the Rhine: they brought the particularist form of society.

Historians have not failed to notice that the Frankish invasion differed essentially from the other Germanic invasions. They have grasped the difference at three points, which present, as it were, its exterior aspects. They state that:

1. Entire tribes took part in the Germanic invasions; the people rose in a body in their full numbers, and marched as if they formed a single band, with their women and children and all their portable goods. The Vandals, the Suevi, the Burgundians, the Visigoths, who invaded Gaul in succession, and all those who spread over the rest of the empire, came in this manner.

The Frankish invasions alone were carried out by small isolated bands, which were quite independent of each other, had but little equipment, and were composed almost exclusively of men, and of young men.

While the Burgundians, for example, entered Gaul in one body, counting about sixty thousand souls, the finest band of Franks under Clovis counted hardly six thousand. Besides that band there were the Franks under Sigebert, those under Ragnachaire, those under Cararic, those under Renomez, and others, of course. It was not the wholesale general migration

of a people; the band consisted of convoys of emigrants who had left their relations and had entered into an agreement with different transport contractors, with different leaders of expeditions.

2. The Germanic invasions, which set out from the Baltic plain, emptied that region completely, but it was soon refilled by tribes of Slavs coming from the east.

The Frankish invasion, which set out from the Saxon plain, did not empty that region, but, on the contrary, the Saxons there continued to spread from place to place, after their peculiar manner, and it was not long before they encroached on the lands of their emigrants the Franks. Thence arose the famous wars between the Franks and the Saxons, which lasted till Charlemagne conquered the Saxon plain.

3. The Germanic invasions made only ephemeral settlements. The kingdoms of the Ostrogoths, the Visigoths, the Gepides, the Vandals, the Burgundians, the Suevi, the Rugii, the Heruli, the Lombards, all rapidly disappeared.

The Frankish invaders gradually absorbed all their settlements, first of all in Gaul and in Germany, afterwards in the south and east, through conquest or through their influence; and in proportion as they absorbed them, more in some places and less in others, they set up an absolutely new system of government, feudalism, which spread over all Europe, and lasted for centuries. This will become clear as we go on.

But, though historians have remarked these very considerable and obvious differences between the Germanic and the Frankish invasions, they have not perceived the causes of them. They have not even searched for them. They have taken the fact for what it is worth.

We, however, know the cause which lies at the bottom of the phenomenon. We know that of all the Germanic invaders the Franks alone belonged to the particularist form of society; and we know that this form of society *not only explains* the three distinctive features we have just mentioned, *but makes their presence inevitable.* No sooner were they stated than they appeared to us to be the obvious and necessary consequence of our previous observations.

After having remarked these peculiar characteristics, historians have, none the less, classed the Frankish invasions

among the Germanic invasions. Our investigations put an end to all such confusion. The Frankish invaders, on the one hand, who came from the Saxon plain, bringing with them the particularist family, must be clearly distinguished from the Germanic invaders, properly so called, who came from the Baltic plain, and brought with them merely the patriarchal family, more or less disorganised by long military expeditions.

Among the invasions commonly called Germanic, but wrongly so called, the only one which brought about a complete change in the constitution of *Continental* Europe—we shall speak of the Saxon expeditions over seas later—was the Frankish invasion, and no other. We, French, should have more satisfaction in recording that fact if we had remained more faithful to our original character. We shall see in the course of our history how we departed from it.

We must complete these preliminaries by a further remark. The new territory over which the Frankish invaders spread with their particularist families was the Rhenish basin, including the wide plains of the Meuse and the Escaut, which make part of it. Thus the New Germany is in the Rhenish basin, and not, like Old Germany, in the Baltic plain. It is a point worth noting that the New Germany had at first no other name than that of the *country of the Franks*: Eastern France on the right bank of the Rhine, in the valleys of the Main and the more northern tributaries; Western France on the left bank of the Rhine, in the valleys of the Moselle, the Meuse, and the Escaut. That made up the whole of France; it had no territory elsewhere. On the side towards Gaul, to which its land hardly reached, the south-western boundaries were formed by the Somme, and by the low hills which rise above the basins of the Seine and the Rhone. But the name of France, on the contrary, as we shall see, soon disappeared from the Rhenish basin, and was transferred and restricted to the land below the Somme and the northern hills of the basins of the Seine and the Rhone; and, for centuries, from the last of the Carlovingians to Louis XIV., the name scarcely extended any farther. The basin of the Rhine and all the districts of ancient Germany, which were gradually won back from the Slavs by the Frankish and Saxon race, received different names, notably those of the

Germanic Empire and of Germany. But it is none the less true that this Frankish and Saxon race dwelt there and continued to predominate until there too, and through the same causes as in France, it degenerated from its original character. More than once we shall have occasion to notice the strange vicissitudes and curious shiftings from one place to another which the names of peoples and countries undergo.

Now that we have seen our Franks well encamped, as they ought to be from the beginning in history, face to face with all the Old Germans, let us continue the history of events after their settlement.

The Frankish band, we saw, when it came to a halt, at first maintained the organisation it had formed for transport purposes, for military purposes, but the agricultural emigrant, on setting foot once more on an estate, grasped anew the instrument of his independence. Thence arose the struggle between the Odinid warrior and the agricultural emigrant, between the head of the State and the owner of the estate, between the prince and the private man. It is our purpose to watch this curious duel between the patriarchal *truste* and the estate with its particularist family.

The duel would not have lasted long had not the patriarchal *truste* been of service in guaranteeing the security of the land of the particularist family. It was with that object in view that the Frankish emigrants had united themselves to the Odinid warrior. It was for that object that they remained friendly to him for some time. The story of the dismissal of Merovig's own son to Thuringia by emigrants who had only just settled at Tournay, is enough to show what would have immediately happened to the military chief and his *truste*, if there had not still been some reason for their existence, after the first invasion had been successfully accomplished.

In short, the warrior and the emigrant continued to pursue the same object—namely, the satisfaction of their desire for new lands; and on that point they were agreed and supported each other.

But once the possession of the land was assured, they were not agreed as to how to benefit by it.

The warrior attempted to exploit the country by using the means furnished by government—namely, war, taxation, justice,

civil administration—and also claimed the right of living at the expense of the people.

The emigrant intended to exploit the country through the estate, and would allow no one, certainly not the Government, to live at his expense.

We shall watch the development of the two institutions side by side: the administration of a sovereign, and the independent estate; the one a creation of the patriarchal *truste*, the other a creation of the particularist family.

The first sharp division between the warrior and the emigrants came about when Clovis, the leader of the Franks of Tournay, obeying the passion which burned in every Odinid, crossed the borders of the Rhenish basin and definitively made Paris the centre of an armed invasion. The Franks followed him even on this foolish enterprise, but it was for the last time. In that expedition there was still a Frank chief, as before, at the head of a chosen army drawn from two sources: the band of Franks and the so-called Roman legions. But once Clovis was installed, dead, and buried at Paris, the only kind of army which henceforth followed the Frank chief was one which was recruited from the original inhabitants of the conquered country by means of a "pressgang." The special convocation of the Franks no longer met, their votes of assent were no more heard, there was no longer a Champs de Mars.[1]

But another point must be mentioned here. Of course the emigrant who had settled in the region from which recruits were obtained *en masse* must have been required to join the army with the rest. However, in the first place, the levy was made by preference in districts that were still but little inhabited by Franks. In the second place, the constraint put upon men to join the army was not so great but that many of them stayed at home; so much so that it was considered necessary to institute a fine against them. In the third place, it was all very well to institute fines, but it must have been more difficult to collect them. Since the owner of the estate was called upon to arm himself and his men, or a part of his men, it was natural enough that the thought should occur to him to use this following for defending the inviolability and freedom of his person and his

[1] On this subject see *La Monarchie franque*, by Fustel de Coulanges, p. 288 ff.

estate against the collector of fines. We have a proof of this tendency in the "recognitions of immunity" that were freely granted by the king.

This undoubted separation between the warrior and the band of emigrants is highly characteristic of both parties. I need not point out how much it is in accordance with their natural tendencies.

But the result of it was that the chief with his *truste* formed an organisation of his own, altogether apart from the emigrants. When he was thus his own master, what sort of organisation did he adopt? The organisation of Roman government, pure and simple.

This is replete with Social Science.

What! The chief of a Germanic *truste* adopted at the first the Roman system of administration! Is it not a fact that that administration was the result of a form of society absolutely peculiar to the Greeks and the Romans, and still more pronounced with the Romans than with the Greeks? Is it not a fact that it was unique in the society of antiquity? Or is it really true, after all, and proved by historical evidence, that it was simply a form of government used by a tribe of Germans!

Historians have got into great difficulties over this point too. It is true, nevertheless, that the barbarian chiefs, the Old Germans, not only Clovis but also the kings of the Visigoths, the Burgundians, and all the Germanic tribes that we enumerated above, adopted the Roman system as it stood, and for the very good reason that the Romans had adopted the barbarian system a long time back.

People who have studied Roman law know very well that the true Roman law, the law of the Quirites, gradually gave place to the law of the aliens—that is to say, to the private law of the barbarians—as Rome extended little by little outside her walls. This change went on with extraordinary rapidity, especially from the time of the empire. So that Roman law at the end of the empire is not Roman law, but rather the common law of the barbarians. The only difference is that the Roman lawyers put it all into admirable order.

Now, what happened to the private law of the Romans happened also to their public law, to their political institutions.

The real, purely Roman institutions were, in the end, replaced, even at Rome, by barbarian institutions.

But historians have not taken this into account in dealing with the matter before us. So that M. Fustel de Coulanges, for instance, when he finds that the chiefs of the *trustes* adopted all the Roman institutions of the period of the empire, exclaims, "These Germans, who are so much cried up, copied the Romans in everything. They have not a single original idea; they have not introduced one new institution of even the smallest worth! Everything about them is Roman!" I believe he would gladly have said, "That embalms the Roman!" And he does not observe that it is the Roman who embalms, or rather infects and corrupts, the barbarian.

Therein lies the solution of this historical problem. The barbarians were completely *Romanised* because the Romans had been completely *barbarised.*

Rome had completely fallen back upon the clan system. I will explain why, presently. But she did add something to that system as well as to the private law of the aliens, namely, preciseness and regularity of forms, in imitation of the exactitude she showed in her ancient administration, which she owed, in the first place, to that body of great landed proprietors, who, under the name of patricians, had organised and managed it as their peculiar work during the first centuries of her existence. But now that we have reached the moment when the particularist family was settled on estates on Roman soil—estates which formed a social and political organisation, which is still that of the future, that of the Anglo-Saxon races—it is necessary to know why the old Roman administration, entirely founded as it was on an admirable government of landed proprietors, did not last.

The first founders of Rome were, it is true, solitary agricultural emigrants, like the founders of the particularist family. They too tried to build up both the private and the public independence of the individual. But there were no coasts of the North Sea, no seacoast fisheries to help them to secure their entire independence at the first. They were at once obliged to seek a guarantee of independence in association: that was what Romulus achieved. Thus they became not absolutely isolated landowners, with no one but themselves

to rely upon in times of need, but a corporation of landowners united for the advantage of all. That was the constitution of Rome. They formed a "bourgeoisie," as it would still be called in Switzerland.

This body of bourgeois, landed proprietors, could not be maintained unless great caution was used in the choice of its recruits and unless great cleverness was shown in governing those of the new-comers whom it did not admit to its privileges. If the Romans had created other bodies like their own in other towns besides Rome, those bodies would have been able to grow like their own and become their rivals, and perhaps successful rivals. So, when they took possession of neighbouring towns, they only gave them the management of their own small, purely local interests; and those of the inhabitants who were admitted to Roman citizenship were obliged to come to Rome to exercise their rights in the general affairs of the republic, their right of voting, and their right of admission to the public offices of pretor, of consul, etc. Rome governed the whole of Italy on this principle. Such was her ancient administration, her original system of government. She maintained it until she was obliged to go outside Italy, in order to strike a blow at the power of Carthage in Sicily, which was too near not to be dangerous.

But when Rome had conquered Sicily, and, with no rival in the field, was able to extend her conquests outside Italy, she created the "province" and the "proconsul" for the distant tribes, which were annexed in a body—that is to say, she adopted for those regions the barbarian form of government, the government by the chief of the clan, in short.

The proconsul was nothing more than the chief of a clan, appointed by the republic, who really took the place of or was put over the chiefs of the barbarian clans among which he was sent. With his double retinue of legionaries and functionaries, whom he completely won to his side by the profits he allowed them to make out of the province, he was nothing else than a Roman at the head of a *truste*. Look at Verres; look at them all. They are all the same in spite of the differences which the diversity of their personal character impresses on their administration.

Now it is obvious that it soon became the dream of the

most eminent of the proconsuls, when they were recalled to Rome at the end of their term of office, to become consuls in Rome itself, and govern, or rather work, Rome for their own advantage, like a province. Look at Marius, Sulla, Pompey, and Cæsar in succession. The dream could be realised by the proconsul, if on his return to Rome he came with several legions as his *truste* and with riches enough to enable him to buy as many partisans among the people as would be necessary to procure him, on any terms, all the honours and all the public offices.

That is the way the government of Rome—the Roman administration—came to be an exact model of the barbarian *truste*. The proconsuls shaped themselves to it in the barbarian provinces.

The *provincial* Roman government was simply the form of government used by the *truste*, but it was practised by Romans among barbarians. The *imperial* Roman government did not differ from the provincial government except that it was held at Rome. The organisation of Roman territory, then, since the withdrawal of the great proconsuls—Marius, Sulla, Pompey, Cæsar, Octavius—altogether degenerated into a system of clan government, of government by *trustes* in the barbarian fashion.

That accounts for the Asiatic aspect which the Roman Empire wore after the fall of the republic—that is to say, when the really original government of the bourgeoisie of Rome had passed away.

The barbarians had in reality already conquered Rome and destroyed the Romans when the empire was formed, since the private law of the aliens and the public law of the provinces had caused the law of the Quirites and the government of the city of Rome to disappear.

From these premises we draw two conclusions:

1. The original constitution of Rome had not the principle of endurance that the particularist form of society possessed.

In short, there is no comparison possible between two such institutions as these: on the one hand a body of citizens, landed proprietors, who in a single town undertook to conduct the public affairs of an immense territory—of Italy in the first place, and, later, of the coasts of Africa and a great part of Europe and

of Nearer Asia; on the other hand, simple owners of estates, absolutely independent one of the other, who each undertook to manage entirely his own estate in every respect. It is clear that the citizen body must have been unequal to the task even when its territory extended only over Italy, and much more so when it extended beyond; while, on the contrary, the independent owners had no more exhausted their power when they had filled a continent than when they had filled a province: each man had only his own estate to look after. It seems clear that when the citizen body came to an end, everything that depended on it must have given way, and could not have been easily built up again; while, on the contrary, when any of the independent estate owners died, they alone disappeared, and were easily replaced by others.

Therein lies the immense difference between the social and political constitution of the Romans and the social and political constitution of the races with particularist families. It explains how the Roman Republic cracked at the frontiers of Italy while the American Republic does not crack though it extends over an immeasurably larger area. It explains how it is that the Roman type disappeared, perished with Rome, while the type of the particularist family is as full of life to-day as it was two thousand years ago.

2. The Merovingian chief, the head of a *truste*, had no difficulty in adopting the proconsular and imperial system of Roman administration.

It was natural to him, since it was his own system: the only difference was that it was made more convenient for him in certain regards by the formalism and red-tape which the Romans had added to it out of respect for the traditions of exactitude and order of the administration of the old Roman citizens.

Let us examine this imperial or Merovingian administration (for they are the same) in greater detail.

Gaul was divided, for the purposes of government, just as it was in the time of the Celts, into districts, to each of which the name of *pagus* was given in ancient times. The term *pagus* was later replaced by *civitas*, in accordance with a translation which Cæsar used in his Commentaries. The *pagus* consisted of a Gaulish town which held sway over a small rural district and

a few villages. The Roman emperor or the Merovingian prince sent as their deputy to each *pagus* or *civitas* one of their faithful followers, a "companion" of their *truste*: *comes*, a count. Tacitus uses the word to translate *antrustion*, the faithful follower;[1] it was the title which the emperors adopted for the governor whom they appointed to the *civitas*. The great proconsul and the large province had actually disappeared: the count, a proconsul on a smaller scale, was more convenient and less dangerous to the emperor.

When it was advantageous to place several *civitates* under the command of a superior officer, the emperor or the Merovingian prince sent a trusty comrade of greater capacity or more tested fidelity to occupy a temporary position of command over several counts. The empire gave him also a thoroughly barbarian name, which had never figured among the appellations of officers in ancient Rome: *dux*, chief, duke.

Had a Celt belonging to the times before Cæsar come back to the world, he would have found the whole administrative system of his own time still in existence, with only two differences:

1. The chiefs of small clans in the *pagi* and the occasional chiefs of confederations of *pagi* were now appointed by the emperor or the Merovingian, instead of by the *pagi* themselves. They were known as counts and dukes, names that would have been at once intelligible to our Celt.

2. The formalities, the official documents (diplomas), gave an air of better order and superior intelligence to the same methods of governing the country.

The chief duty of the count, be it understood, was to levy taxes. That was what his official documents (diploma) made clear to him. He raised as much money as he could and in whatever way he could, employing the methods a proconsul, a pasha, or any tribal chief in a subordinate position would use. The emperor or the Merovingian prince had this much control over him, that they could disgrace him if the taxes did not come in properly. So he had to find means of some kind or another of sending money to his master. I subjoin an example of the way things were done:

In the *civitas* of Tours there was a count called Eunomus,

[1] *Comes*, the antrustion; *comitatus*, the truste: *Germania*, xiii.

who had a man called Injuriosus as his lieutenant (*vicarius*). They procured the right amount of money which had to be sent to Childebert, as tribute, from four partners, two Jews and two Christians. They made out promissory notes to the four partners. When they came to claim the money, Injuriosus invited the Jew Armentarius, the one who was spokesman, to stay to dinner. After dinner they went out together, and the next day the four partners were lying, assassinated, at the bottom of a well near Injuriosus' house. When they did not come back, their relations were troubled, went to Tours, and discovered the facts, and the bodies were found in the well. Injuriosus was at once suspected of the crime, but he denied it, and proposed to justify himself by an oath. The others preferred to appeal to Childebert. Injuriosus came before the king to plead his cause, and conscientiously waited three days till the setting of the sun. "As his adversaries did not put in an appearance, and no one brought an accusation against him in the matter, he returned home." [1] That was one of the ways of raising tribute-money at little expense. After that was paid, everything collected from the people was pure personal profit.

Besides levying the taxes, it was the duty of the count to hold a court of justice periodically, either at the chief town in the *civitas* or in the villages which he visited on his circuit. He was sole judge. His place could be taken by his lieutenant, his *vicarius*, a man of his own choosing. He summoned some of the leading inhabitants, also of his own choosing, "to help him," but not to judge: they were called the *boni homines* or *rachimburgs*. They numbered from three to seven, or even more, and only passed judgment if the count, in his own absence and that of his *vicarius*, allowed them to do so in his name. The public were summoned to be present. It was very much like a pasha's court of justice!

Besides levying taxes and administering justice (such justice as it was!), the count was responsible for the maintenance of law and order. He had also to levy an army when it was the prince's desire to make war. We saw that under the successors of Clovis the army was levied by means of press-gangs, by recruiting men wholesale in a merciless manner. Men who were strong enough to venture to resist, remained

[1] *Grégoire de Tours*, vii. 23.

behind, and were obliged to pay a fine. I should not imagine that they paid it every time, though no doubt that would have pleased M. Fustel de Coulanges.

In short, the count was the sole representative of the emperor or the Merovingian prince. He was their factotum.

Consequently, it was essential that he should be liable to dismissal; and in theory he was nominated only for a time, very likely for only a year. But he sometimes had means of getting his appointment prolonged; in fact, that goes without saying, and "sometimes" is euphemistic. I will quote as an example a story which I particularly remember, because the events described in it take an unexpected turn, which adds still more point to it. In order to get his appointment extended, a count despatched one of his sons to the king with presents. The son gave the presents in his own name, and went back invested with his father's office!

"A certain man named Leudastus, a slave born on the king's estate and serving in the royal kitchens, a run-away on several occasions (in other respects an excellent fellow!), succeeded in becoming head of the queen's stables, and grew rich in that capacity. On the queen's death he gave full many a present to the king, in order to obtain the same post in his service; then from count of the stable (constable, if you like!) he became count of the *civitas* of Tours, in which capacity his conduct was more overbearing, haughtier, and more rapacious than that of any of his predecessors." [1]

That was the way to obtain a post and continue in it.

But there is one more point to be added: the count personally chose all his own circle, all his agents; he appointed them in his own name; he, in his own person, and not the king, received their oath to perform their offices faithfully. The king did not figure there at all, any more than the emperor did before.

All this might be as truly said of the small tribe. It is really the picture of an ordinary *truste* with a count at its head.

The principal agents, then, that were appointed were:

The count's lieutenant (the *vicarius*), his substitute or his assistant in everything.

The count's officers (the *centenarii*, the centurions, or officers, as one might say), who were secondary agents to help or take

[1] *Grégoire de Tours*, v. 48, 49.

the place of the count in duties of secondary importance or of a more local nature, such as small lawsuits, or the government of parts of the *pagus*, etc.

Behind the agents there was very likely a crowd of clients. With a government of this description there were many opportunities of doing people both good and bad turns!

The count lived in the town, the centre of the *civitas* or *pagus*. That was also the custom of the Roman governor and of the Celtic or German chieftain of a clan!

He had nothing to do with the management of rural landed property belonging to the *fisc*, as it was called—that is to say, to the emperor or the Merovingian prince. Those properties were separately managed by private agents of the king—ordinary managers.

The count probably had the use of some royal villa as his country estate; but that was all: it was only an annex to his official residence in the town.

His whole strength lay in his clan.

The small clans forming the *civitates* or counties, to which the counts were sent by the king's appointment all over the country, were only the satellites of the great clan of the emperor or the Merovingian.

This great central *truste* from which the counts emanated was called the imperial or royal palace or court—*palatium* or *domus*. The name was more frequently applied to the *truste* itself than to the urban residences or country houses to which it went on occasion. The *truste* accompanied the prince.

The prince also had a lieutenant, the *major palatii* or *major domus*, the mayor of the palace. He was the prime minister, if not the only minister—the grand vizir.

The subordinate offices were held by trusty followers, who were also called counts (companions)—that is, counts of the palace, to distinguish them from the city counts. Other offices were adorned with other titles, all of a barbarian origin—cupbearer (*échanson*), etc.

The still more subordinate posts were held by numberless agents of all classes. There was a fairly regular system of promotion. It was an ideal *truste*! Everyone was entirely subject to the king's will, needless to say.

So much for the establishment of the warrior chief who entered Gaul with a band of emigrants and soon became divided from them, as we have seen.

I leave the reader to imagine, or rather to recollect, the fearful commotions that necessarily arose in the little worlds dominated by *trustes*! No history is more melodramatic than that of the Merovingians: the reader has only to look at any page of Gregory de Tours to be assured of it. On the death of a Merovingian, all his sons immediately divided his *truste* between them. Then each of them tried to make the others fall into an ambuscade, in order to win the support of their followers. If he failed, his own followers deserted him and joined the others. He would then intrigue. His followers would return to his side: by that time the others had divided his followers and property among themselves. He would then make a second attempt, with better success, and manage to assassinate one of his brothers: in that way he would secure two tribes for his side. He would then be the strongest, and would be able to defeat another brother, and put him to death. The others would soon share the same fate, once he had strengthened his following in this way. He would then be sole chief. After him, his sons began to fight again. And so it went on.

But events like these were not limited only to family life.

Clovis too suppressed the chiefs of other Frankish bands which had come into Gaul as he did, by means such as we have just described, and he took possession of all the Roman territory that was left between the Somme and the Loire. In this way he extended his power over half the north of Gaul. His neighbours on the south of the line of the Loire and the basin of the Moselle were the Old Germans of the Baltic plain, who, as we know, had spread over the south of Europe: there were the Visigoths in the basin of the Garonne, and the Burgundians in the basin of the Rhone. They employed the same system of government as he did: they too had their *truste*, and carried out admirably the Romano-Barbarian system of government, which they too found on the spot. They also carried on the "game of clan faction" among themselves, and reproduced the struggles of the Merovingians, which I have just described, with their neighbours: Merovingians, Visigoths, Bourguignons,

all used the same means to dispute the power. Clovis, who had made himself powerful "by the means we know of," got the upper hand: the Merovingians were soon the only princes on what was formerly Gallic soil.

But they still went on with their family fights.

Their neighbours beyond the Rhine, beyond Eastern France, were different: there were the Saxons to the north of Eastern France, who pressed upon their borders continually; there was a remnant of Old Germans, un-Romanised, to the east of Eastern France, who were being sorely pressed between the Saxons and the Slavs from the other side of the Elbe, and wished to go south like the rest: they were called Suevi, or Swabians, Alemanni—that is to say, "all men," or "united tribes"; and Thuringians. South of Eastern France, the Huns, a nomad race, kept descending to the Main, when they reached the end of the Danube. These hostile tribes, who lived close together, frequently made coalitions for the purpose of penetrating into France.

In the face of so large an invasion, the tribal chieftains of whom we have spoken joined forces for a moment, unless it happened that one of them had at that very moment brought about a kind of unity by conquering the others, and becoming sole master. In any case, the invaders were repulsed in battles on the Unstrut, at Tolbiac, at Châlons, and other places. The Saxons kept within their borders for a time. The Huns took themselves off. The Thuringians, Swabians, and Alemanni were incorporated with the Franks: the first on the north of the Main, the others in the south as far as the basin of the Danube in the valley of the Neckar. The Merovingian king organised, or rather extended, his Romano-Gallic system of government among these incorporated tribes.

In this way the warrior chiefs of the Franks established their dominion over all Gaul and the whole of the Rhenish basin up to Bâle and Constance.

That was the expanse of land which the restless *truste* had of its own accord continued to open up for Frankish emigrants. There was no longer any lack of land for them! The warrior chief had pushed on terribly far! But they on their part were not displeased; it was to their profit. But how could that be?

For what could the poor little estate do in the midst of scuffles, wars, devastations, and under the immense power of the *truste* ? How could it so much as exist ?

It was on the way to overthrow that power entirely, and to set up its own sovereignty in its stead.

That will be the subject of the next chapter.

CHAPTER VIII

THE FRANK

PART III

THE Odinid warrior, who organised a public means of transport for the emigrants from the Saxon plain, retained his marching staff, his communal *truste*, after his arrival in the lands peopled by Gallo-Romans and Old Germans, and he made the *truste* into a staff of public officers in accordance with all the patriarchal traditions.

The agricultural emigrants who had come from particularist families travelled at his side, but broke the order of march to settle on isolated estates. As we shall see, they made their rights of property the basis of a public power which supplanted the other form of government and triumphed over the patriarchal form of society.

At the very outset this fact strikes us as curious, that a bold and warlike band of volunteers, which was victorious, homogeneous, and so small that it was easy for all its members to know each other and act in concert, should never for a moment dream of forming a pretorian guard, a body of Mamelukes or Janissaries, so as to master its chief and wield the authority independently of him. They cannot have had the same conception of power as others. They must have conceived of it in quite an unusual way.

Later on the emigrants from the Saxon plain no longer formed armed bands, but passed into the conquered territory at their ease ; they kept straggling in, one by one, at their own free will and pleasure.

Indeed, the Merovingian clan, whose first care was to suppress all the existing chiefs of Frankish bands, was naturally very anxious to preserve its territory against any new attempts

at armed invasion. If the Saxons chanced to appear on the frontier in a military band, the Merovingian prince hurried to the spot and drove them back. If the Thuringians, the Swabians, or the Alemanni, whom the Slavs had dislodged from Old Germany, made an inroad in a body into the Rhenish basin, the Merovingian prince first disarmed them, and then allowed them to settle.

When the emigrants of the particularist type ceased to penetrate into Frankish territory in warlike bands, and entered it only one by one, there is no doubt that they mainly occupied the lands nearest the Saxon plain—that is to say, the lower basin of the Rhine, including the valleys of the Main and the Moselle. They had no motive for going as far as that part of Western Gaul which slopes down to the Atlantic. In this way two very distinct groups of tribes were formed under Merovingian sway: one in the lower basin of the Rhine, consisting of particularist families in the main; the other in the basin of the Seine, between the Somme and the Loire, consisting of patriarchal families in a disorganised state. The second region was the only part of old Celtic Gaul which completely escaped all Germanic domination and remained absolutely Celtic and Roman till the arrival of Clovis.

The difference of their formation accounts for the difference of character of these two groups of people, which is further accentuated by the fact that their countries soon came to be called by names which were opposed the one to the other—namely, Austrasia and Neustria.

Austrasia will evidently be the place where we shall see the Frankish emigrants develop to the best advantage. Neustria, on the contrary, is the country where the Merovingian *truste* flourished from the time of Clovis' arrival. What a land of promise for the system of clan government! A land that had remained Celtic! and which, in addition, had remained intact as a province under Roman administration. The empire had retained its authority there; though most of Gaul had been dismembered by the first barbarians, this part had kept the name of *Romanum Imperium*.

There is a theory that because Neustria was the country where conditions were most favourable to the rule of the most remarkable of the Frankish chiefs, and was the seat of his

government, it was therefore looked upon as the centre of the nation, and that, therefore, the name of France clung to it rather than to the rest of the country when the whole territory was conquered and split up into new divisions with different names. But it is certainly untenable. That region was essentially and thoroughly Celtic. The kernel of the Frankish nation, on the contrary, was in Austrasia. The Teutonic language continued to be spoken there, while it actually died out among the Old Germans, Visigoths, and Burgundians, and gave place to Latin; it spread from there later on, together with the particularist family, over Ancient Germany, which had temporarily fallen into the hands of the Slavs. In this way Austrasia became the centre of a new Germany, which was called the Germanic Empire. Such is the fate of names: an eminently Celtic people received the name of Franks, and an eminently Frankish people received the name of Germans.

Whilst they congregated chiefly in Austrasia, because of its proximity to the Saxon plain, the emigrants of the particularist type did not cease to penetrate in every direction. They were found in all parts of the Merovingian territory. But it is none the less certain that the particularist influence diminished in proportion to the distance from Austrasia, from the lower basin of the Rhine.

Further, Franks were often found actually in the Merovingian *truste* and in the *trustes* of the counts, a fact which helps to account for their diffusion and for their success at the outset. There seem to have been as many of them in the *trustes* as there were Gallo-Romans and Old Germans. There is nothing surprising in this, and it only accentuates one of the characteristics we have already observed in the mode of development of the particularist emigrant. His whole object was not accomplished when he had succeeded in making his way comfortably into Austrasia, or even further; he had besides to make a first outlay while waiting for the windfall, the purchase perhaps of an estate, in any event, for the harvest; he wanted something that would be an ample and convenient substitute for the help the family used to give in the Saxon plain. The *truste*, whether Merovingian or attached to a count, offered him a splendid substitute. It provided, as we have seen, numerous posts of every grade and a regular system of promotion. Its

officers were maintained, and could also make as large profits as they wished. In addition, war offered exceptional opportunities for acquiring booty and lands.

The *truste* system, then, was wonderfully well adapted to serve the emigrant as a ladder by which he might attain to an estate. How many people, therefore, must have passed through the *trustes* of the kings and the counts! How many examples have we not in history, in hagiography, of Franks who settled on an estate and became plain private men after having been in a more or less high position in a king's or a count's *truste* for a longer or shorter time!

So this method of procedure, which formed a constituent part of the life of the particularist family, continued to be carried on, and became more conspicuous, although it was modified according to circumstances. The emigrant practised a trade for a time in order to secure an estate for himself: in Norway he was a seacoast fisherman; in the Saxon plain, where he was compelled to emancipate himself by the more active intervention of his relations, he made, with their help, the very soil of the estate he was to farm; in the Frankish expeditions he got booty as a soldier; in the conquered country he became an *antrustion*. But his attitude towards these professions, which he practised like anyone else, and often better, was characteristic: he only devoted himself to them because they were the means to an estate, not because he had any idea of carrying them on for long as objects in themselves. These Franks, as we see, who had no wish to be incorporated permanently in the *truste* in a body could, without departing from their particularist principles, make use of it individually and for a time only. That is the reason why we find them still hanging about the Merovingian prince after they have ceased to be his bodyguard. This evolution is curious, and shows why they did not have an inveterate hatred of the *truste*, which in this way rendered them so opportune a service, and why they did not instantly make a decisive revolt. Their attitude towards it was such that they managed to defend themselves against its malpractices, whilst they made use of the advantages it offered till the time came when they succeeded in building up into its full strength the superior

and sovereign power of the estate, which ultimately overthrew the Merovingians and the system of *trustes*.

However, the *truste* was far from being the only transitory and lucrative profession to which the particularist emigrant turned. In the first place, there were other besides public offices in the *truste* itself: there were private posts as well, and many of them. In the king's or the count's "house" there was employment for artisans of all trades, and an opening for arts as well as crafts. There was also the management of the property belonging to the Treasury—that is to say, belonging to the king—immense properties, which had either to be kept up or to be developed, and which were scattered about in different parts of the country: agricultural and grazing lands, forests, magnificent moors. An excellent training-ground for an agricultural emigrant!

It must not be forgotten, moreover, that we are no longer on the poor soil of the Saxon plain, from which the wandering Cherusci gradually retired before the advancing Saxons; we are in the rich country of a sedentary and agricultural people, who have stood their ground before the invaders. What a number of posts there were to be filled, of trades of all sorts to be practised to advantage among the rich members of the Gallo-Roman population! What opportunities for learning agriculture! What a land of Cockayne for the poor Frankish emigrant! It is easy to understand his readiness to accommodate himself temporarily, with a few reservations, to the ways of the Merovingians.

There is no difficulty, either, in understanding how he accomplished the wonderful transition from small farming to high farming, which we shall soon have to consider.

At length he was established, after practising some trade or other for a time, if it were necessary, on an estate of his own, one that he had found for himself in a fine situation, undeveloped, or abandoned, or belonging to a country house he had acquired, or that he had been clever enough to win in return for some service. How did he set about working it?

Let us carefully follow all the steps of his emancipation.

We have already seen how he supported his claim to be the independent master of an estate by resisting the king's taxes in an exceptional manner, so that M. Fustel de Coulanges,

"the great extortioner of the Franks," in spite of all his documental evidence, feels obliged to declare in two successive works that he believes at bottom that the Franks very seldom paid taxes. We have seen another no less remarkable proof of the independence to which the Frank laid claim on his estate: he required that no agent of the king should enter it on any business whatsoever of a public character; he undertook to do that business himself. In this matter, his action was not grounded on the fact that the people on the estate were slaves and dependent upon him, but directly on the inviolability of the estate; for he intended to keep order among, and dispense justice to, not only the serfs, but the free men, Franks like himself, for the very reason that they were upon his land—an absolutely new procedure.

But it is not enough merely to state the claims which the Frankish landowner made and the success he met with: we have still to see what it was that caused him to succeed so well.

In the first place, in order to realise matters better by a contrast, let us get an idea of how an estate was managed before the arrival of the Franks, in the decadent period of the empire.

The estate was cultivated by a band of slaves who lived in a troop, lodged in a cabin, were divided into squads of ten for purposes of work, and were under the complete power of a chosen slave called the *Villicus*. The landowner lived in the town principally, the centre of the *civitas*, where, moreover, he was bound by the edicts of the emperors to perform the duties of a *curialis*—that is to say, of a member of the municipality. Not only was he forced to be a member of it, but he had to take his share of the duties connected with it, and be *duumvir*, for example—that is to say, municipal consul. In both these ways he was made responsible with his own fortune for the taxes of the whole of the *civitas*, and was charged in his turn with the duty of collecting them. All historians have drawn attention to the fact that the development of these urban centres among the Gauls was far greater in the times of the Romans than in the times of the Celts. The master probably went from time to time to his country house—or his country houses. It also happened that he went there fairly often, and, on certain occasions, for a visit of some length; but he went there as Cicero, Horace, or Pliny did—merely

for a stay in the country. His home was not there. It is true that he sometimes took an interest in agriculture, even to a considerable degree; but in spite of that, he was not a real man of the country, a man living on the spot, who devoted himself to the management of his landed property and to the personal direction of the men on his estate. Public affairs, intellectual pursuits, worldly intercourse, the pleasures of the town or country, were ordinarily the very fount of his existence. This was the result of his mixed patriarchal and urban origin, Celtic and Roman.

M. Fustel de Coulanges, after having collected all the documents he can find to prove that a master such as we have just described was practically a lord of the manor of the Middle Ages, is nevertheless obliged to conclude that the Roman landowner was at bottom only half rural: that is the whole point. And it must not be forgotten that he is dealing with only the best examples of Roman landowners, not the majority. "It is a certain fact," he says, "that all the literature we have of the fourth and fifth century" (observe, however, how near we get to the Frankish epoch) "depicts the Roman aristocracy as a rural as much as an urban class." (Here is the confession! Urban, then, as much as rural!) "It is urban inasmuch as it holds the magistracies and governs the cities." (Nothing more!) "It is rural in its interests" (absentee landlords of the worst type, then, are rural!) "because it spends the greater part of its existence in the country" (yes, merely for change of air!), "in its tastes" (yes, in its taste for horses, for dogs, for hunting, which are far from excluding town pleasures).[1]

The system of land culture which I have just described was called "direct": it is easy to picture the band of slaves managed by a slave, and the master coming from the town just to see how the machine was working, and to wind it up again. Observe once more that that was the best type. Many masters left everything to the head slave, or were quite unacquainted with the others, and simply enjoyed the estate without accepting any of its responsibilities.

The conclusion is that the staff of labourers on a Roman estate had no solid bond of attachment to the land or the master.

[1] *L'Alleu et le domaine rural*, pp. 94–96.

Apart from direct land culture, there was "indirect" cultivation by farmers, by *coloni*. By large farmers? No! There was no question of large farmers; if a man were free and wealthy, he bought, and did not rent his land. By quite small farmers, then? Yes, by free men without a halfpenny in their pocket and without ability, who were reduced to the cultivation of land. They were called cultivators.

At first there were very few of them. Bad times during the empire increased their number. As they hardly ever managed to pay their rent, they became shackled by debt, and were obliged to go on cultivating the land until they had paid the last farthing they owed—that is to say, indefinitely—and their children after them were bound in the same way in the quality of responsible heirs.

It may be thought that here, at any rate, was a staff of labourers attached to the soil and bound to a master. But it was not so at all.

Taxes had become so heavy under the empire, which was plundered by the emperors far more than by the barbarians, that the landowners preferred to abandon their property and the cultivators to stop farming, rather than be responsible to the Treasury for the taxes of the estate.

The emperors thought of an expedient: they made some of the barbarians, who were always to be found on the frontiers asking for lands within the empire, into cultivators. Barbarians were transported by thousands into the interior of the empire, and were established either on the lands which the emperor was obliged to keep for himself, for want of persons who would cultivate them of their own free will, or on the lands of private men who had applied for cultivators to the "official employment bureau." (That phrase is rendered literally.) The imperial administration did not reduce the barbarians to slavery because, in that case, they would merely have been under masters who were responsible for them, and the Treasury would have had nothing to do with them directly: the Treasury wanted cultivators who were nominally free, and would be personally responsible for the payment of the dues levied on the harvests they reaped.

The results of such an arrangement can be guessed from the motives which inspired it. In a word, the cultivator

found that the Treasury appropriated all the results of his work. His rent probably amounted to only a tithe of his harvests. We must conclude, from the small amount of rent he was bound to pay to the landowner, that he could not have kept much of the produce of his labour for himself, and that the Treasury swallowed up almost all of it. Under those conditions, the settler had no ambition to remain what he was, whether he happened to be a barbarian or a Roman cultivator. Nor was the landowner more anxious to keep him, for he was ultimately responsible to the Treasury for the cultivator; it was better to leave the land uncultivated and say to the Treasury, "Take it, if you want to."

The introduction of barbarian cultivators, then, missed fire: the Treasury again found empty lands staring it in the face.

The emperors took a step further: they forbade the landowners to dismiss their cultivators; they were obliged at the same time to forbid them to alter their contracts with the cultivators; and to complete the step, the cultivators also were forbidden to give up agriculture.

In this way, agriculture was made obligatory, and the cultivator was fixed to the land. So much for indirect cultivation.

Of course the landowner did not take an atom of interest in it. How could that be expected? He had absolutely nothing to do with it, and no right to make any changes. It was the Treasury (the only party interested) which took direct charge of the registration of the amount of each tenure, of the name of the cultivator, of the rent due to the landowner; it was the Treasury which kept direct watch over the tenure to see that it was not abandoned, and that it was handed on to the cultivator's heirs.

In order to accomplish this, the Treasury, when on circuit, summoned the cultivators of each estate to appear before it. Salvien tells us that he absolutely blushed to describe those odious interferences of the Treasury.

This, then, was "indirect cultivation": the Treasury took the place of the landowner altogether, the cultivators were robbed of their harvests by the Treasury, and were only kept on the land by force, by public constraint. In this case, too, a staff of farm labourers could scarcely be expected to

have any strong bond of union with the master or with the estate.

To complete the picture of the Roman estate, we must add that some slaves were placed upon the same footing as the cultivators, except in so far as they were not freemen—a scarcely appreciable difference. They were called *servi casati*, because they had a separate tenure, a hut to themselves, like the cultivators; or *servi adscripticii*, because they were individually registered with their tenure by the Treasury; or else *servi colonarii*, because they shared these privileges with the cultivators (*coloni*). But this does not add to or detract from the idea of indirect cultivation we have just given.

All the documents of the times before the Frankish invasion, and the edicts of the emperors of even a later date who ruled outside Frankish territory, show that the Roman estate was such as we have described.

Let us now see how estates in the hands of Franks were managed after the Frankish invasion.

The first thing the Frankish emigrant did on his estate was characteristic and absolutely original. He used one part of his land to serve the other: one was the "land of service," the other the "land of mastership."

M. Fustel de Coulanges says: "But the Romans had actually divided their estates into two parts before this: one which they worked directly through the *familia* of slaves and the slave *villicus*; and the other which they worked indirectly through the cultivators, or the servile cultivators." He does not grasp that, if one part was cultivated directly and the other indirectly, they could never have been anything else than entirely separate parts, and could never have formed an organised whole, in which the people who occupied and found their living on one part also cultivated the other. Yet it is as clear as daylight. The point is, not that the Frank divided his estate into two parts, but that he used those parts in a particular way.

Where did the Frank get the idea of using one part of his land to serve the other? It came to him with his own traditions. The solitary Gothic emigrant was a man who had seen all his own personal ties broken. He had fallen back on the possession, the freest and most absolute possession, of an

estate of his own. In it were all his resources. When he wished to make one of his adult sons definitely his partner, what course did he pursue? He granted him his estate on condition that he supplied his father, mother, brothers, or sisters with certain things. That was the accepted procedure. No other was possible. When at length he went south to the Saxon plain, he found people there who were suitable for slaves. Did he use them as his personal servants? No, he did not even use them for his personal service, which he was content to have done, says Tacitus, "by his wife and by his children of tender age."[1] Did he form them into gangs to work under a *villicus*? No; he allotted to each of them a plot of land, and laid upon him, as his duty, not to serve him as master, but to serve a portion of the estate of which his plot was a part. Thus he proceeded in the same way in the settlement of his slave as in the settlement of his associated heir: he granted him land and exacted services which were connected with the land, incorporated, as it were, in the possession of the soil, and which could no more be shifted than the land itself, and were transmitted with it. This system, then, which bound the man to the soil, was adopted by the particularist family, and took the place of the patriarchal system, by which man was bound to man. It was that method, and none other, that the Frankish emigrant continued to employ in the rich lands of Gaul and of the Rhenish basin. He applied it first to the serfs, the slaves, his fellow-workers—afterwards to the freemen, his fellow-workers, as will appear later—in the same way as he formerly applied it to his slaves in the Saxon plain, even in the time of Tacitus, and from the very beginning, actually on the shores of the North Sea, to his free associated heir. The "land of mastership" and the "land of service" are not creations, but institutions, introduced by the Frankish emigrant, at any rate as regards their fundamental idea, from the lands his ancestors inhabited.

Besides the sequence of facts which I have just set forth, and the hiatus between this organisation and that of the Romans, which I described a few pages back, there are two things that prove the origin of the above system:

1. The Franks were the only people that had a name for this

[1] *Germania*, xxv.

organisation, *mansus dominicatus*, the dominating estate; *mansi serviles seu aspicientes*, the servile estates, or those that "look up to" another as if to obey it. There is nothing of that sort found among the Romans till well into the fifth century.

2. It is not merely the name that is new, but the thing itself. "The division" (division is not exactly the right word) "of the estate into two parts became general at that time," says M. Fustel de Coulanges. It is certainly true that it was general, but as regards the statement that it *became* general at that time, he ought to have shown that it existed before; whereas, as a matter of fact, it was not introduced till then, and immediately, or very soon, became general.

But, to continue: *mansus dominicatus*, an expression that appeared only at that time, is merely a translation; the original name, the correct one, is found in the charters of the north and east (as M. Fustel confesses)—that is to say, in Austrasia, the land that is most thoroughly Frankish; the correct name designating the master-estate is *sala* (or *terra salica*). The *mansus dominicatus* is simply the *salle*, the *hall*, the manor house with a great central hall, an importation from the Saxon plain, the master-house, and with it the *salic land*, which depends on it, the *land belonging to the hall*. And the *mansi serviles seu aspicientes*; what were they called? *Casæ*, small dwellings, huts; or else *hobæ*, *höfe*. Even M. Fustel de Coulanges does not overlook the truth of this fact, for he supports the view of the professors of the École des Chartes in declaring that the Franks were called *Saliens* because of this institution of the *sala* and the *terra salica*, because of the peculiar organisation of their estate therein implied; and the name of Saliens is accepted as having been applied generally to all the Franks.

But the facts of social life have more weight than all the utterances of learned men. Now, a very short time after the settlement of the Franks, the two widespread institutions of the *familiæ* of slaves, and the cultivators who were permanently attached to estates by the Treasury, disappeared from all parts. And what took their place? The Saxon system of slavery as described by Tacitus. There were no more *familiæ* nor cultivators after the Roman style; but, instead, Saxon slaves pure and simple, or a few remaining cultivators, "who had become

exactly like " the slaves, as M. Fustel expressly states. It was serfdom, in fact.

It was so very much like the Saxon system of slavery that M. Fustel is again obliged to notice a new feature, unheard of among the Romans but remarked by Tacitus when he was in Germany: the slave's wife and children did not work for the master! They worked for their husband and father; even the grown-up sons worked on the plot of land belonging to their father, until the master made an agreement with them to grant them some land of their own.

Thus that kind of serfdom, that organisation of the estate which consisted in giving up one part of it in order that another part of it might be worked, a short time after the Frankish invasion completely took the place of the twofold system of the *familiæ* of slaves and the establishments of cultivators. Is this clear?

To clench the matter further, observe the new, absolutely typical meaning of the term *mansus servilis* in the new organisation. It was no longer a plot of land held by a slave, but a plot of land which, as it were, owed slave service, so that no matter who held it, whether he were a freeman or even an ecclesiastic, the holding was accountable for slave service on the estate. It was the business of the man who had the holding to get the work done at his own expense, if he thought it beneath him or outside his range to do the work himself.

The immediate and immanent consequence of the Frankish system was that certain services to be rendered on the estate, apart from the plot of land, were exacted in return for every plot of land that was conceded. This arrangement, which did away with the necessity of having the *familiæ* of slaves, demanded an entire change in the cultivator's agreement; for he had hitherto been obliged, like an ordinary farmer, to hand over to his master a portion of the produce of his holding, in money or in kind, a fixed portion, or one proportioned to his harvest. The object of the Frankish holding was not to supply produce raised on the holding itself—that produce, except for very small dues, was entirely given over to the tenant as his own property—the object of the Frankish holding was to contribute a certain amount of labour to the " land of mastership." If we are in the right, we must, therefore, expect to see a revo-

lution in the condition of the cultivators, in the terms of their agreements with their masters from the time of the Frankish invasion. Now such a revolution did actually take place. The cultivators, as I have just said, were previously only farmers, they were not *liable to forced labour*. In all parts they very soon became liable to forced labour, like the serfs. They only differed from freemen in name, and such a difference was hardly appreciable.

This revolution is all the more striking because from the second to the sixth century there was a memorable series of imperial edicts, which secured the *absolute immutability of the ancient agreements made with cultivators*. Now, before the sixth century, before the Franks, there is no mention in any document of any work, under the name of forced labour, being demanded of the cultivator other than what was still entered a few years ago in the leases of the Normandy farmers, and is still executed by neighbours when they "do each other a good turn"—that is to say, when they give each other a hand on occasions when work has to be done that requires a large number of persons at one time. According to the only statements that can be produced, the cultivator was, to be precise, bound to give "two days' tillage, two days' weeding, two days' harvesting in the year"—six days in all per annum! But no sooner had the Franks arrived than the situation was entirely changed. Let us hear what M. Fustel de Coulanges has to say:

"At that time," he says, "*the principle that appeared to dominate everything* was that the land of the proprietor was to be cultivated: this cultivation formed the *principal* part" (what a change!) "of the so-called rent paid by the cultivators. Sometimes the extent of land that each one had to cultivate, or the number of days he was to work, was fixed beforehand; sometimes it was indeterminate" (that was an absolutely new arrangement). "One man owed one day's work (*a week*), another two, another three (*per week*)." (That is to say, a hundred and fifty-six per annum instead of six!) "Many cultivators" (and this is extremely important) "had to contribute forced labour, manual labour, carting, wood-cutting, up to any amount desired. The arbitrary will of the master—or, more correctly, the needs of the estate—decided the extent of their obligations."

There you have a very lucid description bringing out the

main points of the absolutely unique organisation of the Frankish estate. It forms a great contrast to the previous system, and upsets it on every point, even with regard to the cultivators, who seem to be the least changed part of it. It is an entirely original institution, and irreconcilable with its predecessors.

Now let us briefly examine the results:

1. The staff of the estate is strongly bound to the soil. I am not here speaking of the obligation which binds it. The cultivator was also bound by an obligation: he was bound by the arrears of debt which he owed the landowner, and later by the compulsion exerted by the fiscus, and by the edicts of the emperors. But that is not the sort of bond to which a man holds.

The serf, on the contrary, was bound by the concession of a dwelling and a piece of land with full rights of use. There he was his own master, master of his family, of his work and of its produce: there was no landowner, no fiscus to plunder him. The dues which the serf had to pay in kind, were, as I have said, insignificant: a few chickens, a little honey, etc., small things which the master did not want to produce on a large scale himself. A man in that kind of situation would readily and naturally become attached to the soil.

It will not be out of place to mention here that the serf's *mansus* in every case embraced all that was necessary to life: a field for cereals and textile plants, a meadow for serviceable animals, a vineyard to provide drink, wood for cutting when it was needed; and last, but not least, the house with its closed courtyard.[1]

2. The staff of the estate was strongly attached to the master: each serf came to work under the master's orders *three days a week* at least. Such close contact with the master would, I think, have had a powerful influence upon the men. Observe that in the ordering of the estate it was only a very small, infinitely small part of the forced labour that was definitely set apart beforehand for special tasks, as, for instance, the "dressing of a vineyard of a certain area." The far larger portion of forced labour consisted of so many days' work at any job the master might determine. This was the indisputable mark of the care which the master meant to give to agri-

[1] See the *Polyptiques*.

culture. When a man's chief care is, not to direct the work himself, but to receive the products of labour at his ease, he does not himself undertake to direct the whole staff of the estate and portion out its work. Look at the people nowadays who employ farmers: they do so in order to have none of the cares that the work brings. The Frank acted in just the opposite way: he suppressed farmers, cultivators who paid rent. He was actuated by quite opposite feelings.

The Frank had good reason to prefer forced labour which could be directed to whatever purpose he liked: it was no longer a question, as in the Saxon plain, of keeping a small estate with the limited productive powers common to a poor soil in a good productive condition; it was a question of clearing immense wide domains and of bringing new rich lands under cultivation. Such a thing could not be accomplished unless the labour was entirely at the master's disposal.

It must not be forgotten that Austrasia in particular, the favourite land of the Franks, had been very little cleared in the time of the Romans. They had not extended the vigour of their influence as far as that, and the incessant dread of German invasions had prevented the country from prospering and from being peopled. Those immense German forests which the wars of the Roman Empire made famous, stretched all over the region of which we are speaking.

The Franks were responsible for the clearing of Austrasia.

The personal supervision of the master two or three days a week had a completer influence because, as Tacitus notes, he treated his slaves kindly, a fact which is further proved by Frankish history. The liberty he allowed them in their own homes and in their own families, their settlement on small holdings, which were provided with everything and placed entirely at their disposal, are all evidence of kindness; Tacitus puts it very explicitly: "*Verberare servum, ac vinculis et opere coercere, rarum. Occidere solent, non disciplina et severitate, sed impetu et ira ut inimicum.*" [1]

But as soon as the staff was firmly attached to the estate and to the master, two dreaded enemies made their appearance: the future and the outside world.

The Frank provided against them, a fact which gives us

[1] *Germania*, xxv. 1

the explanation of two fresh historical features of the organisation of his estate.

1. The future: the Frank always used the same simple means of providing for it. He ceded his land to an heir on condition "that he carried things on as they were, and kept each man in the same relation to the land in which his predecessor had placed him." That was the origin of the strange stability of the serfs — that is, of the slaves who appeared to have no rights — and of the curious fact that masters could not change the condition of their slaves. There are documents which prove it.

Observe that this stability was in no way prejudicial to progress in agriculture, since with the great majority of slaves forced labour took the form of a certain number of days' work, and the number of days was often indeterminate, and the master was at liberty to turn his serf to whatever work he thought best.

2. The outside world: we saw that the Merovingians did not hesitate to *commovere exercitum*, to get the counts to proclaim the king's summons to arms, and to levy all the men, or at least a good number, in order to go to war. Into what disorder the excellent organisation of the estate must have been thrown by these levies! As a matter of fact, it was not so; the Frank had provided against it. The only men who could be required for military service were freemen, cultivators. The Franks had rapidly converted the cultivators into serfs: they were not content merely to put them on the same footing as the serfs by making them contribute forced labour, as we have said: the *colonatus* (*i.e.* the status of a *colonus* or cultivator), which signified a status of liberty, soon completely disappeared. That is the explanation of this otherwise inexplicable phenomenon: namely, the substitution of serfdom for the *colonatus*, in spite of Christian ideas about enfranchisement.

Picture to yourself a staff of labourers, firmly bound to the estate, accustomed to the constant supervision of their master, fixed to the spot for generations, and secure against the attempts of the counts to enlist them in the army. Then tell me if the master had not on the spot an army sufficiently strong, sufficiently under his control and attached to his cause

to defend his estate and forbid the entrance of anyone he did not wish to see? Can you not now understand the reason for those warrants of immunity which rained from the hands of the Merovingians, forbidding the counts to meddle with any living thing on the estate, or interfere with anything that might go on there? Were not the master and servants sufficiently in harmony and sufficiently bound to one another to defend the domain? Would it be productive of good-will to enter it in spite of them?

And who was it who had won so much freedom for the estate? The Frank, with the absolutely original system of management which he had brought with him from the land of his fathers.

Now that we have begun to feel reassured as to the fate of the Frankish emigrant and his estate, we will pause for the present: we can breathe freely.

We now have to fear for the count and the Merovingian. In fact, it remains for us to see how it was that the Frank managed to increase the importance of the estate so much that the count and the Merovingian king were destroyed, and replaced by the owner of the estate.

Let us not be disturbed by the idea that at any rate our landowner, in the quality of a freeman, was required for war and dragged far away from his estate by an enforced military career. We have already said, upon the evidence of history, that he knew very well, if he remained at home and was liable to a penalty, how to avoid paying it; we have just seen how he used to stop the count at the entrance to his estate when he came to collect fines.

We shall see this more clearly in the next chapter.

CHAPTER IX

THE FRANK

PART IV

THE basis of the Frankish emigrant's power lay, as we have seen, in the altogether peculiar organisation of his estate. The *familia* of slaves and the *colonatus* of the Romans gave place to the Saxon system of serfdom, rendered complete by the combination of the "land of mastership" and the "land of service."

By this system the working staff of the estate was firmly and genuinely bound to the domain and to the master of the domain; the strength of the Frankish emigrant lay in his domain and in his ability to manage his staff.

Before going further, let us observe the following point, which was characteristic of the domain belonging to a particularist family. It was through the estate that the bonds attaching its occupants to one another were formed; whereas in the patriarchal system the organisation of the domain depended on the bonds established directly between its occupants.

In fact, the only direct bonds preserved between persons in the system of independence practised by the particularist family were the following:

1. The bond between husband and wife. The fact that the husband was absolutely free to choose his wife solely for her personal merits, strengthened the bond between them.

2. The bonds between the parents and their young children. These were assured by the natural dependence of the children and by the stern warning conveyed to them in conversation and in everyday occurrences that they must draw as much advantage as they could from their education, so that when they were grown up they might not succumb beneath the pressure

of necessity, and might be able to extricate themselves from difficulties.

As for bonds between adults, there were no direct bonds, except those of marriage. There certainly were voluntary associations, but they were restricted to special objects, and were only temporary.

With these exceptions, the adult had no firm and sure bond of union, except with the land. So much for the manner of life of the particularist family and the nature of its estate.

In the previous chapter we noted the superior strength of the bonds formed between persons through the estate. But however great the power of the Frankish emigrant may have been on his own estate, he was inferior in one respect to the Merovingian *truste*: his resources were limited to what the estate could furnish, both as to the number of men and the amount of produce. The supply was certain, but small.

The Merovingian *truste* was fundamentally weak, because it depended on purely personal ties; on the other hand, we have seen the great extent of its resources: its staff of officers was unlimited, its kingdom was immense, and continued to be enlarged. In the presence of an adverse power such as that, the emigrant was obliged to have a stronger guarantee of his independence than he had in the Saxon plain. The domain, with its Saxon organisation, formed only the first foundation, as it were, of the bulwark of his independence. More had to be added, as we shall see.

Nothing but a coalition of landowners, it seems, could have really guaranteed the independence of the estates in face of the extensive power of the *truste*. But if that coalition had been founded on the same basis as the *truste*—that is, on the direct association of persons—it would have run exactly the same risks as the *truste*. That is what actually occurred. At every opportunity, under the rule of the Merovingians, the inhabitants of a *pagus*, of a larger area, or even of one of the Frankish kingdoms, with the richest landowners at their head, declared in a body for one party or another, supported one candidate for power or another, voted for one war and opposed another, took vengeance for one tax that had been levied and refused to pay another; but such leagues were dissolved as

easily as they were formed; they had no stronger bond of union than that of a clan.

Therefore the coalition of the Frankish landowners was not based on the principle of personal ties. It was based, like the first Frankish institutions, on rights over land. And its might was irresistible.

We must now watch the development of the curious movement by which the social system brought from the shores of the North Sea, and based on the self-sufficiency of each individual on his estate, revealed its full strength, and completely took the place of the social systems hitherto known in the west.

The rich lands of Gaul and of the Rhenish basin enabled the *truste* to expand to a far greater degree than it would have been able to do on the barren lands of the Saxon plain; but it must also be said that those same rich lands brought about a considerable change in the domain of the private man. The barrenness of the soil, the small amount of help rendered by the family, the exiguity of the land, had made it essential to have only small estates in the Saxon plain; whereas the richness of the soil, the abundance of booty, the advantage of being able to occupy lucrative posts for a time, the immense extent of territory opened for the particularist family by the expeditions of Frankish bands or Merovingian armies, made it easy for the emigrant Frank to have a large estate. That is where the new element comes in.

We have already seen the characteristic manner in which the influence of the large estate made itself felt. If Tacitus can be trusted, we must believe that the serf's task consisted in contributing a certain quantity of produce: "*modum frumenti, aut pecoris, aut vestis, dominus, ut colono, injungit, et servus hactenus paret*" [1] ("The master settles, as he would with a *colonus*, the quantity of corn or cattle or material for clothing to be supplied: the serf's task is limited to that"). This system of the regulation of work naturally sprang from the small estate, where the amount of the produce was stationary; but in the time of the Merovingians there appears in the so-called *Polyptiques*—that is, the collections of deeds relating to property—side by side with the institution of the "land of mastership and of service," a system of forced labour — no longer

[1] *Germania*, XXV.

under the form of contributions of produce—which was imitated from the Saxon system of job-work. Such and such a *servile mansus*, for instance, was responsible for the "dressing of an acre or so of vineyard." That system, however, was also only suitable for a form of agriculture which produced a stationary amount. But it was an advance towards a greater modification.

Side by side with this kind of forced labour there was another kind, which is entered in the account of the above *mansus*, and it shows the transformation which the large estate and high farming brought about in the Frankish system. "This same *mansus*," it is said, "is responsible for *three days*' work *a week*." The three days evidently formed the greater part of the work, and reveal a system by which work was calculated not by the amount of the contributions of produce, nor by the piece, *but by the day*. The reason is that as the estate grew larger there were fresh demands for labour and for an indefinite amount of it, for it could no longer be determined by a fixed object. When fresh land is constantly being cleared and the soil is being worked on a large scale, there are numberless improvements to be carried out apart from the incessant turning over of the earth. Under such conditions it would have been impossible to guarantee constant employment to a serf except by determining the time he was to work; that was the direction taken by the large landowners, as appears from the deeds of settlement, of donation, or of transmission of their estates.

Another immediate result of the transition from the small estate to the large, from small farming to high farming, was the development of opportunities among the capable Frankish emigrants of giving employment. The choice of trades was likely to become immense. The diversity of occupations continued to increase and multiply. Thus Franks were found in the most different and opposite conditions of fortune. Some were as rich in lands as princes: others were so poor that they were forced to become serfs. Historians are astonished to find this phenomenon among a conquering and dominating race, or else they misunderstand it; but there is nothing unnatural about it.

The shrewdest of the Franks, then, were able to make splendid estates for themselves in a very short time.

But development of land on a large scale cannot be managed by a single man! He must have helpers.

As the Franks did not accept the idea of a *villicus* or slave superintendent, nor of the detestable gangs of freed-men, they did not think of looking for their assistant-managers except in the class of freemen. These freemen were the same as those we came across on the estate in studying the warrants of immunity forbidding the counts to interfere either with the serfs of the estate or with the freemen *who lived on the estate*.

These freemen evidently occupied a new and unwonted position among the people from the Saxon plain. They were freemen who were strangers to the landowner's family and had no estate of their own. Therefore it is not strange that the position of these freemen from the time of the arrival of the Franks is not so clearly defined as that of the serfs. It is sketched out, but ill defined: it can only be made clear by a process of groping.

The apparent obscurity of the origin of the *vassals*, and of everything connected with vassalage, is thus explained.

From the very beginning, however, the name that is used by preference for men in this peculiar position is one from which the latinised word *vassus* is probably derived: they are called guests, *gasts* in the Saxon tongue. The charters and historians translate this Germanic word by *ingenui commanentes*, or else by *accolæ*, etc., all synonyms of *guests*. "On each domain," says M. Fustel de Coulanges, "there dwelled a regular tribe of people. In the first place there were the serfs, either born there or bought, etc. . . . Above these categories of men there were usually some freemen on the estate, *ingenui*, who had been established there under the name of inhabitants, *accolæ*, or of guests, *hospites*" (mark this well): "*with the use of a plot of land* called the *hospitium*. Some were in the position of farmers of the land (that is to say, they paid a certain amount of rent over and above the liberal service they rendered on the estate, just as certain serfs paid a rent in addition to their forced labour); others were simple inhabitants, *commanentes* (that is to say, they did not pay rent); but they all, though they entered the estate as freemen, were obliged to accept

a position of dependence with regard to the landowner, and became "his men." [1]

All the following remarks are extremely important:

1. They became "his men"; and in spite of their title of *ingenui* and *franci* which they received on all sides, and which suggested no hint of hindrance or restriction, it is obvious that they were not on the estate for nothing, but were there *to perform the services required of freemen.* That such was the fact is clearly proved by the manner in which they are always alluded to, and represented as forming part of the following of the Dominus or Senior, the great landowner. That personage, indeed, as M. Fustel de Coulanges says, had "two groups of people *attached to him through the estate,*" freemen, who were simply called *his men,* and serf men, who were simply called *his serfs.* The following passage is most explicit on this subject; it is from a letter of immunity: "*Jussimus, ut nec comes, nec ullus judex publicus, in eosdem terminos, ad homines ejus, tam ingenuos quam servos, ibidem habitantes, distringendos ingredi præsumat*" [2] ("It is our command that no count nor any public officer attempt to enter the above-named property in order to interfere with *his men*" (the men of the lord), "*whether freemen or serfs,* who dwell therein"). Both freemen and serfs are "his people, his men."

2. The men who performed the duties of freemen on the estate had a holding on the estate, a plot of land which was granted to them and was usually called *hospitium,* guest-land: so the same method that was adopted for slaves began to be used for the free servant. And this holding shows all the signs of having been an institution in process of formation, a trial scheme; there is nothing very fixed or definite about it. It was an institution that was actually in use without being formally recognised as a right. Serfdom, too, had undergone some alterations before it became, as we saw, a fixed and legally recognised thing owing to the charge laid upon the heir to allow the serfs to retain the same relation to the land as they had when they first came there. The *hospitium* might be held or not, at pleasure. It had to be so,

[1] Beauchet, *Organisation judiciaire à l'époque franque,* p. 435.
[2] *Ibid.* p. 472.

since, on the one hand, the master had to do with a freeman who could not have constraint put upon him nor be retained against his will; and, on the other hand, the service expected from him was of such a kind that it was a difficult thing to find out how far a man would continue to make himself useful, show himself fit for the post, and answer to the requirements.

The *hospitium*, then, was a grant of land which he was allowed to abandon if he wished to free himself from the services which were attached to it. The grant could equally well be withdrawn by the landowner if the man to whom it was granted did not perform the services to the master's liking. That was the principle on which it was worked. But all sorts of agreements adapted to the kind of people that were dealt with, the kind of services in question, modified the *hospitium* to an indefinite extent as regards the kind of land, the services connected with it, and the duration of the grant. Freemen of all descriptions are entered in the deeds as holding grants of land. There were opportunities for such a variety of men, and so many different kinds of service! Was there not, among others, the religious service, which was secured to the estate itself by means of assignments of land that were made to the chapel and to the chaplains? These large estates were equivalent to parishes.

Rights, therefore, and special charges were attached to each *hospitium*. In the deeds of donation or transmission it is found that, side by side with the *servile mansi*, a quantity of so-called free-holdings, *ingenuiles*, figure sometimes under special, sometimes under generic names, and often have appended the following or analogous words as a summary: "*Omnia tenementa ad eundem fundum pertinentia.*" The "guest-lands" were handed over with their "guests," just as the *servile mansi* were handed over with their serfs. In such a case it remained with the guest to decide whether he wished to stay there or not, and with the new owner to decide whether he wished to keep his guest or not. But the point that is clear is that the contract made with the previous landowner held good and regulated the conditions under which both parties could separate.

In short, the conditions under which free-holdings were granted varied according to the state of the times, the locality,

and the importance of the estate. They were probably clearly defined in each individual case; but there was no generally accepted form.

Nevertheless, the appellation of *hospitium* must be retained as the general name for all varieties of free-holdings:

1. Because it was suggested by the Germanic word *gast* (guest), which is found in connection with the idea of serfdom from the beginning of the Frankish period as designating men who, though they were quite free, yet took service under someone, albeit on honourable terms. The term *vassus* (vassal) seems to have originally come from the same word *gast*. Thus from the words themselves it is easy to grasp the transitional steps between the tenure of land as a *hospitium* and the tenure of land under the conditions of *vassalage*.

2. Because *hospitium* is the first name employed in the documents in which different systems of free tenure appear. It keeps up the analogy with a Roman contract. It was quite natural to compare the holding of a *gast* with the dwelling of a Roman *hospes*, since the terms and the agreements are similar in some ways. But the Roman *hospes* in no respect played the part of the Frankish *gast* in his relation to the master of the estate. Those people must be very simple-minded who fall into the error of supposing that Frankish institutions bearing Latin names come from Roman institutions. The Latin tongue prevailed as a consequence of what took place in Neustria, as we have already seen. The Frankish terms had accordingly to be translated into Latin. New things have to be translated by analogies. But because a word is transferred from one institution to an analogous institution, it does not follow that the two institutions form only one and spring from one another. It is also imperative to know the difference of their origin when the term does not correspond in its second application with what it represented in the first. Now that is what happened in this case. *Gast* with the Franks did not answer to the social condition and situation occupied by the *hospes* among the Romans, where he was only a kind of petty tenant without a lease and of no importance. The analogy is thus limited to the fundamental meaning of the word guest, which is very vague and broad, and also to the power of withdrawing the tenure, which was common to both

the institutions. It is impossible to see any resemblance between the Roman *hospes* and the vassal of the Middle Ages, whereas the resemblance between the *homines ingenui commanentes in fundo* and the vassals is seen at a glance and proved by history. The reason is that the *homines ingenui commanentes in fundo* did not spring from the Roman *hospites*, and consequently there is a gap between the two kinds of *hospitium*.

That, then, was the origin of the free-holding.

But now that our capable emigrant is well furnished with assistants, freemen, who answer to the *Auxiliaries of Employment*, as Social Science calls them, how will he be able to screen them from the interference of the count ?

In the case of the manual labourers he had no difficulty. He made them enter into the condition of serfs, and that done, the count had no more to say about the matter, either from the point of view of barbarian or of Roman law ; for slaves were excluded from the army, and were under the jurisdiction of their master. But what about the freemen ?

In the first place, let us see how they escaped military service.

Of course the object of levies *en masse* was to collect the largest possible number of freemen. But since this method of recruiting presupposes the absence of military organisation, the men thus levied were not furnished with the means of living. They were obliged to live by pillage. Consequently they could not be levied except near the frontier of a hostile country : otherwise they would have pillaged their own country all the way along the road. This put a restriction as to area upon the levies *en masse*. Moreover, they could not take place frequently, as no country would ever tolerate levies *en masse* on all occasions. For that reason levies *en masse* were reserved for the occasion of a great invasion, as we have already seen. At other times (and the Merovingians hardly did anything but fight !) troops had to be raised by methods of persuasion and no longer *en masse*. Now when the army was not levied *en masse*, the area from which recruits were to be obtained must have been extended in order to have the desired number of men. But the men had to travel some distance before reaching the hostile territory

where they could pillage, and pillaging by the way on friendly territory had to be forbidden; therefore they were obliged to procure food at their own expense. It resulted from this that only those who had some means of their own could be levied. And as, under the economic conditions of the period, landed property was the ordinary form of wealth and the only form in which it could be estimated, *landowners* were the only men who could be levied. This system of making recruits gradually became more and more methodical until it assumed an official form under the Carlovingians; but it dated from the first conquests of the Merovingians, the time when levies *en masse* were in full swing.

The privileged position of those who were freemen, and not landowners but guests of a landowner, is obvious at a glance. They were not subject to military service: they had no property of their own. As for the landowner, I have already explained that he joined the army, or rather did not join it, except in a case of necessity and often to avoid paying what was called the Ban or Heriban—that is to say, the fine of thirty pence: a heavy fine, but light, after all, for a large landowner, especially when he did not pay it. I must add that he sometimes sent one of his sons in his stead: it meant the beginning of the son's emigration to find an estate of his own.

That is the way in which the "guests" were exempted from military service.

How did they escape the count's jurisdiction?

We have already seen that the Frank knew how to make use of the king's *truste*. Though he had entered the *truste* with the object of becoming rich, he was still better able to profit by it later on. Moreover, presents—and no small number of them were brought to the Champ de Mars and offered on similar occasions—were all that was necessary to procure entries to the court. By winning favour, through rendering services and offering gifts, the great landowner ingratiated himself with the king's steward (*mainbour*) without in any way committing his estate—that is to say, he gained the privilege for himself and all those on his land of passing over the count's jurisdiction, if he distrusted it in the least, and went straight to that of the king. By this act alone he was constituted advocate or attorney for those on his estate—

that is to say, he was authorised to take their defence upon himself.

That is how the count's judicial powers were circumvented. The king's court of justice was very far away! So the "guests" of the estate had no one to interfere with them but the king. Their landowner was also their official counsel for the defence.

It was by privily winning over the king's steward (*mainbour*) that a number of landowners gradually arrived at the immunity mentioned above, and got into their own hands the right of dispensing justice to their freemen. As a matter of fact, it is obvious that the landowner, when he became his men's counsel, in reality thereby pronounced judgment on them, since he would naturally have defended them well or ill, before the king, according as he did or did not wish them to be acquitted. It was not long before the king found it quite as simple to allow them to be legally judged by their counsel for the defence. Exactly the same phenomenon occurred in the Roman Empire and among the barbarians in the case of the legal defender of the city, usually the bishop. The defender had the right of bringing the affairs of the city straight to the king's court of justice, and of defending them before the king. Before long he was himself constituted judge for the majority of cases; it caused less delay.

To continue. The *small landowners*, unless they were very poor, were liable to serve in the army, and were subject to the count's jurisdiction. There can be no doubt that they looked with eyes of envy upon the "guests" of the large estate, who were not only provided with a plot of land, but were also exempt from military service and escaped the count's jurisdiction. We observed, when dealing with the Celtic clan and the Roman system of clientship, that in all stormy epochs the weaker men came to a direct agreement of their own accord with the stronger, that they should have their support and rely on their protection. This was called *commendation*. In seeking commendation a man would use different means, and would obtain different results, according to the possibilities within his reach. Now the choice lay between the count and the large landowner, the favour of the one or the other had to be won. But the protection offered by the large landowner was alone sure and dependable, because he personally remained on the spot, his

estate could not move away, and he had an heir to whom he bequeathed his "guests." The count, on the contrary, was constantly changed, and did not choose his successor. From the moment when the position of the freemen on the large estate became what we have described, the small landowners, who hitherto had only aspired to a place in the count's *truste* in order to reach that of the king, speedily turned their backs upon it and appealed to the large landowners.

The blow was struck. The principle of feudalism was established; the large landowner had defeated the *truste* all along the line. It only remains to follow the history of the movement. The movement itself is unmistakable. The stability of the estate makes way against the instability of the *truste*. That is the secret; therein lies the superiority of the new social order.

The form the new commendation was to take was quite determined. The small landowner had merely to change the title of his property—that is to say, he gave his land into the full possession of the large landowner, who, in his turn, by an amicable arrangement, restored it to him, not as his own property, but to be held as "guest-land," as the tenure of a freeman. Thus the small landowner became the *gast*, the *vassus* of the large landowner.

It is easy to see the effects of this novel proceeding upon the condition of the first free tenures, of the *hospitia* properly so called. The new tenure could not, as a matter of fact, be withdrawn, since, after all, it was still the property of the holder, though under a disguised form. These free tenures, then, went on increasing, and all of them had the character, pure and simple, of holdings in perpetuity.

In the early stages a thousand forms were adopted to make the act of perpetuity seem to be a favour conferred by the large landowner; but there was no doubt about the result: the tenures were hereditary. Thus the freemen belonging to the estate were attached to the estate in perpetuity, like the ordinary serfs. The only point in which they differed from the serfs, apart from the difference of their non-servile employments and of their free services, was that they were free to leave the estate, but had to leave their property behind, which made it rather difficult.

This coalition was formidable indeed! All the more so because it was founded not upon personal ties, but upon the estate, upon concessions of land. It was a thoroughly Saxon idea! How consequent all of it is! What a unity of method it represents!

The kind of large estate which achieved the greatest success in the movement towards commendation, which we may describe as "landed commendation," was the estate of the churches and the abbeys.

In theory, these estates had no other rights than those acquired by the large lay estates. Moreover, they were largely the result of donations of lay Franks, who gave their land on condition that it should be kept intact and that the management of it should continue the same. But, as a matter of fact, the Church offered very special guarantees: 1. All that belonged to it was protected by ecclesiastical censures. 2. Immunities were more freely granted by it, because of the special position held by the clerks, and were, nevertheless, extended to the whole of the estate. 3. The bishops and abbots (except when the kings from the time of Charles Martel abused their power and interfered) were masters chosen subject to certain conditions of canon law, and hence inspired peculiar confidence.

Commendation to ecclesiastical estates by preference took the form of the *précaire*—that is to say, rent was paid for the land ceded. If a man gave his property to the Church, and received it back as a tenure, he was bound to pay a small rental. This is explained by canonical law: property given in that way and made over again in view of the commendation was obviously not destined for the religious worship, nor for the officiating priests, nor for the poor; nevertheless, as those were the objects to which the goods of the Church were supposed to be devoted, it was the custom to allow no one to use any property placed in the hands of the Church without performing some ecclesiastical function, or paying something for the use of it towards the expenses of religious worship, and for the benefit of the poor: the *précaire* fulfilled this last condition.

Commendation to churches became so popular that Chilperic II. said, "Our treasury is impoverished (for the taxes no longer brought in anything), our wealth has passed to the

churches; the bishops are the only kings; the brilliancy of our court has vanished, and the bishops of the cities are invested with it." And Dagobert began to plunder the churches openly, professing that they ought to be poor.

Let us pass on to the next stage. It is clear that at this rate the counts' offices were rapidly falling into the background. Their main sources of income were the fines inflicted by courts of law, of which their share amounted to two-thirds; the confiscations of small properties, for which they found excellent reasons; the dues of all kinds, which they extorted from weaker subjects; the taxes, which they so handled as to keep a large portion for themselves. Now a stop was put to all that by the power and immunities possessed by the large landowners: there were no judicial trials, nor confiscations, nor intimidations, nor taxes, which were not thwarted and opposed.

So, henceforth, the people belonging to the king's *truste* demanded as a recompense for their services lands, rather than the title of count, in order that they might draw a better income than they drew when they performed the duties of counts. Thereupon the Merovingians began to despoil themselves of their immense wealth, and of the wealth of the treasury, in order to give it to their faithful followers. Soon no other resource was left to them but to confiscate the goods of the Church wholesale, in order to satisfy their men. But while they were giving away their own property or that of others, the kings bethought themselves of modifying their old method of procedure in this respect.

In the early days of monarchy, when they gave, they gave with full rights of ownership. Sometimes, however, they simply granted the use of land for life, the usufruct, as we say: but that was much more seldom. It often happened that those who had received the full ownership in perpetuity, or their children after them, turned against the king. Only in such cases did the king consider himself justified in taking back his property, even when no stipulation as to the matter appeared to have been made. The kings learned a lesson from these sudden shifts of devotion, and when they were obliged to multiply their gifts they were prudent enough to hand them over, as a rule, only with rights of usufruct, and

they were then known as benefices (*beneficia*); the usufruct might be extended to the descendants, if they pleased the king as their fathers did. This accounts for the appearance of an enormous number of benefices towards the end of the Merovingian line of kings.

Since, therefore, the holders of benefices were not holders of gifts, but people belonging to the king's estate, they ought, logically, to have been exempt from military service, unless they held property of their own. The kings, and especially the ancestors of the Carlovingians and the first of that line, arranged matters better, and, as regarded military service, put their beneficed people on the same footing as the landowners.

But let us go still further. The king's beneficiaries, come what might, began granting parts of their benefices to men belonging to them, grants which were to hold good only as long as their own benefices lasted. These sub-beneficiaries were called on, quite rightly, according to what has just been said, to join the army; but the beneficiary who had made the sub-grants claimed them as "his men," and said that since the prince constrained them to go to battle they ought not to go except under the leadership of their master, not under that of the count nor under that of the prince. It was very necessary to remain master of one's own men, and not to see them arming against oneself! The time was past when kings could resist the dominant and resolute will of great beneficiaries united to great landowners, who had themselves adopted the benefice as a form of commendation, and had their own sub-beneficiaries to support them. Then, indeed, military feudalism was an accomplished fact. The vast majority of freemen, if they went to war at all, marched behind their great landowner or great beneficiary, and not behind the count or the king, except when they went to fight for the king.

This fact comes out very clearly in the *conventus*, great assemblies of the principal personages of the state, which took place under the later Merovingians. The *seniores*, the lords, those great landowners or beneficiaries, came to the assembly at the head of their own men, who were armed and divided into regiments, and did not obey the king; they were called *vassi* (vassals): the name was already coined.[1]

[1] Fustel de Coulanges, *Monarchie franque.*

So the king found himself alone face to face with a small number of great landowners and great beneficiaries, who kept all his subjects under their own control and kept them equipped with arms. The estate had conquered; it was master: the country was governed by the estate.

The terms corresponding to this state of things are easy to grasp. The lands held with full rights of ownership were *aleux*—that is to say, hereditary lands. Their owners were simply "subjects" of the king—that is to say, they were not bound to him by any special tie. The lands held as freeholds, but only for life, under agreements of every kind, in which were formulated the charges that had to be filled with regard to the estate, were called "benefices." The title of "vassals of the estate" was extended to the holders of such lands. If the domain of which the benefice was a part belonged to the king, they were the "king's vassals," and not merely his "subjects." If the owner of the estate were a private man, they were his vassals, and he was called "senior, seigneur, lord."

The great landowners, then, were bound to go to battle under the king's command, in the quality of subjects; the great beneficiaries in the quality of vassals. But the difference was merely nominal, because the king's beneficiaries were not small beneficiaries, who formed a numerous body immediately under the king's command; they were large beneficiaries, who appeared at the head of their own vassals (*i.e.* of those to whom they had granted small benefices out of the large benefice), and the large beneficiaries, although they were few, laid down the law to the king quite as much as the large landowners.

From that time onwards vassalage was synonymous with military service, and assumed characteristics it did not show at first; but it was the landowner who had the right to claim that military service.

The importance that was attached to military service, from the time when it, in this way, became the decisive instrument of the power of private men—that is, of the lords—caused it to be established that those of the vassals who were still exempt, for diverse reasons, from military service, passed to the second rank, and the current title of vassal was used to indicate a vassal who owed military service.

What was left of the counts? There was no possible opening for a count among all the large landowners and large beneficiaries; they had absorbed all the land, all the people, all the functions into their estates!

The title of count or duke could no longer be given to any but large landowners or large beneficiaries, whose position was not thereby changed. In reality, they acted as counts or dukes only on their own estates, and their power was just as great before they bore the title.

The consequence was that the king and the counts were annihilated by the landowners or beneficiaries of estates.

That was the final result.

We now know and understand how things stood at the time of the decadence of the Merovingians.

It was not long before the signs of decadence showed themselves, for before two centuries had elapsed after Clovis had triumphantly established the Romano-Germanic *truste* in Paris, the decadence of the Merovingians was practically accomplished. The Frankish emigrant, who at that time abandoned the *truste* in order to settle on an estate, had lost no time!

Nevertheless, the emigrant did not pause in mid-career; and, in the following century, he devoted himself to the accomplishment of two coveted designs:

1. To convert the life-use of benefices into hereditary use, pure and simple, in perpetuity.

2. To convert the titles of count and duke, which were considered as revocable and personal, into permanent and hereditary titles attached to the estate of the man to whom they had once been granted.

Amongst the great landowners and beneficiaries who had this object in view, there was one who achieved it in all its completeness, with his unparalleled genius, whilst the rest continued the struggle in pursuit of their own private ends.

This man was the great landowner and beneficiary of Austrasia. He had more than a hundred estates, all told, (and what estates!) in the valley of the Rhine; he had others besides in all parts of the kingdom as far as the Pyrenees.

He possessed in those estates ample means for making the two highest titles in the kingdom hereditary in his family:

namely, that of the Duke of Austrasia and of the mayor of the palace. And that was what he did.

He was called Pepin of Landen, after his favourite estate.

His descendant in the fourth generation considered that it was just as easy to take the title of king.

And in this way Pepin the Short, associated heir of the greatest landowner in Austrasia, personified the triumphant victory of the Frankish emigrant and his estate over the Merovingian warrior and his *truste*.

CHAPTER X

THE FEUDAL SYSTEM

PART I—CHARLEMAGNE

THE government of the Carlovingians could not exhibit the same characteristics as that of the Merovingians. The accession of Pepin the Short did not simply indicate a change of dynasty; with him a new political régime was established, the direct outcome of the development of the particularist form of society: that is, sovereignty, based upon the estate.

We shall get a good grasp of this new form of government if we study the man who gave it its highest expression, namely, Charlemagne.

The whole strength of Charlemagne's position, king and emperor though he was, lay in the fact that he was a great landowner. The family of Heristal attained to power through their large estates, which were organised on the Frankish system. When they subsequently lost their estates they lost their power too. And, as the régime introduced at the accession of the Carlovingians had not disappeared when they lost their estates, it was natural that the family of the Capetians, who were at that moment the greatest landowners in France, should take their place.

The mere knowledge that Charlemagne was essentially a great landowner gives the key to his life. It can be justly said of him that he knew nothing of town life. It is a startling innovation that the head of an immense state, the administrator of a colossal power, should not know what a capital city is. His government had no central seat in a city. In fact, no one can succeed in proving that Aix-la-Chapelle was the point where the power of the Carlovingians was concentrated.

Charlemagne had plenty of towns from which to choose a place where he might establish his offices and display his regal pomp: he chose none of them. His true centre, from which in his eyes everything else radiated, was the old favourite estate of his family, the domain of Heristal in the valley of the Meuse opposite the Saxon plain. And he took very good care not to found a city there. Aix, so named because of its warm waters, and known later by the distinctive name of Aix-la-Chapelle, was not far from there. "Charles took much delight in bathing there in the waters which were supplied by a hot spring," Eginhard tells us. "He was passionately fond of swimming, and became so clever in the art, that there was no one who was a match for him. It was for this reason that he built a palace at Aix-la-Chapelle, and lived there constantly *during the last years* of his life. He used to invite not only his sons to come and bathe with him, but also his friends, the magnates of his court, and sometimes even the soldiers of his guard, so that a hundred persons and more often bathed together." Elsewhere the same historian says, "Charles kept the observances of the Christian religion with the greatest fervour; its principles had been inculcated in him from his earliest years. It was for this reason that he caused a magnificent basilisk to be built at Aix-la-Chapelle and adorned it with gold and silver, with sconces, railings, and doors of massive bronze, and sent for pillars and pieces of marble, with which to embellish it, to Rome and Ravenna, since they could not be obtained elsewhere. He frequented this church assiduously in the evening, the morning, and even during the night, to be present at the services and the holy sacrifice of the Mass, as much as his health would allow."[1] That is all that the contemporary writer, the intimate friend who devoted himself to the task of making an indelible picture of Charlemagne's government for posterity to see, found to say about the part Aix-la-Chapelle played in the history of the mighty leader of the Franks. Our modern savants, who have the unfortunate habit of twisting the evidence of history so as to fit in with the ideas of human society which they have formed to suit their own prejudices, have not been able to accept the fact, which is strange to their eyes, of a great empire

[1] Eginhard, *Vie de l'Empereur Charles*, chaps. xxii. and xxvi.

without a capital. Their efforts have only succeeded in adding to the account of Aix-la-Chapelle a few honorary titles, which apply just as well to a royal residence as to a capital, and of which the most emphatic are drawn from a poetical work. Nothing of that kind has any weight against a detailed knowledge of the long series of Charlemagne's deeds and heroic actions, in which Aix-la-Chapelle is far from figuring as the accepted headquarters of the government. We shall learn more about this presently.

Charlemagne was an active landowner by profession, so that he did not neglect his other estates for Heristal, but merely looked upon it as the centre of his affections. He went from one domain to another, according as necessity called him or circumstances directed.

Nothing can be more interesting in this respect than the list which Eginhard drew up, year after year, of the places to which Charlemagne transferred his residence, and where he dealt with the greatest affairs of the State. It is necessary to read through the whole series of *Annals* in order to get an idea of the extreme to which Charlemagne pushed the singular habit I have just mentioned. In fact, he travelled so much from place to place as a plain private man, and was so little concerned about the establishment of a special seat for the government, that there is not a place, not even a part of the kingdom, which is designated above all others as the place for the general assembly of the Franks, where the lords with their vassals were summoned to deliberate on war, or for the reception of embassies, who were therefore obliged to hunt all over the country, and often even beyond the frontiers, for the representative of the Frankish power. I will quote a few samples: but it would be necessary to quote the whole, in order to get an idea of its extraordinary continuity.

"*The year* 771.—After having held the General Assembly, which he summoned this year *at Valenciennes*, on the Escaut, King Charles returned to Gaul to pass the winter. He spent Christmas *at Attigny* and Easter *at Heristal.*

"*The year* 772.—King Charles, after having convoked the General Assembly *at Worms*, resolved to make war on Saxony. He subsequently returned to the land of the Franks, and spent Christmas and Easter *on his Heristal estate.*

"*The year* 773.—Pope Adrian sent an embassy to Charles entreating the prince to protect him and the Romans against the Lombards. . . . The messenger intrusted with the charge met the King *at Thionville, where he had passed the winter.*

"*The year* 775.—The king passed the winter *on his estate at Kiersy*, and determined to recommence war against the Saxons. He held the General Assembly *on his estate at Duren* (15½ miles from Aix-la-Chapelle).

"*The year* 776.—As the king was re-entering the Assembly, the intelligence reached him that Rotgaud the Lombard was attempting a revolt in Italy. He took the pick of his troops with him. Scarcely had he crossed the Alps when news was brought him that the citadel of Ehresburg had been captured by the Saxons. After having held the Assembly *at Worms*, he resolved to march with all speed against the Saxons. . . . He rebuilt the castle of Ehresburg, which had been destroyed, and returned *to Heristal* to pass the winter.

"*The year* 777.—With the first breath of spring he set out for Nimègue, where he spent Easter. Subsequently, seeing that it was useless to trust the treacherous promises of the Saxons, he determined to go *to a place called Paderborn* (in the Saxon plain) to hold the General Assembly of his people. (There he received once again the submission of the Saxons.) . . . The Saracen Ibn-al-Arbi came to that town to present himself before the king. He had come from Spain, accompanied by other Saracens, in order to surrender himself and all the towns which the king of the Saracens had intrusted to his charge into the hands of the king of the Franks. After having adjourned the General Assembly mentioned above, the king returned to Gaul; he spent Christmas *at his estate of Douzy* (five miles south-east of Sedan), and Easter *at Casseneuil in Aquitaine*, fifteen miles north of Agen."[1]

In this way things were carried on without any question arising as to which town was to be considered as the capital of the country.

I will quote a few more passages which are of peculiar interest.

"*The year* 800.—With the return of spring, towards the

[1] Eginhard, *Annales des Francs de l'année*, 741; *à l'année*, 829.

middle of March, the king *left Aix-la-Chapelle*, and journeyed round the shores of the Gallic Ocean; he established a fleet in those latitudes, which were then infested by northmen with their pirate ships, placed garrisons along the coast, and spent Easter *at Centule in the Monastery of St. Riquier*. He continued his journey along the seacoast, and reached the city of Rouen: then he crossed the Seine and journeyed to Saint Martin de Tours, in order to perform his devotions there. He remained at Tours for a few days, detained by the hopeless condition of his wife Lintgard, who died in that town, and was there buried. The king subsequently returned *viâ Orleans and Paris to Aix-la-Chapelle*; and at the beginning of the month of August journeyed to Mayence, where he held the General Assembly, and announced his intention of making a journey to Italy.

"*The year* 804.—Towards the middle of September the emperor travelled to Cologne. After having disbanded his army he went first to Aix-la-Chapelle, and thence to the Ardennes for hunting. Then he returned to his palace at Aix. Towards the middle of November he received the news that the pope desired to spend Christmas with him in any place that would suit his convenience. He hastened to send his son Charles to Saint Maurice (in Valais), with directions to receive the pope with due honour. He himself went to meet the pope at Rheims, and after receiving him in that town *conducted him first to his estate of Kiersy, where they spent Christmas, and afterwards to Aix-la-Chapelle.*"

In this long sequence of events, Charlemagne's preference for his domains is manifest. As I have said elsewhere, it was the estate which governed. The winters, from Christmas to Easter, almost constantly passed *on his estates*, show what a firm hold rural traditions had upon the most illustrious of the Franks. If, "in the last years of his life," he came back most frequently to his palace at Aix-la-Chapelle, it was really, as Eginhard suggests, from a sporting instinct, and not from any love of town life or politics. Exactly the same rural tendencies were exhibited by Charlemagne's father and predecessor, Pepin the Short.[1] The Merovingians, as well as all the monarchs of the world, had of course their country houses,

[1] Eginhard, *Annales*, years 753, 757, and from 759 to 768.

which were their places of amusement, and where it occasionally happened that some event of note took place. But they all had their capital town, which was their great stronghold, the genuine centre of their power, whose name has been preserved in history by their kingdom: there was the kingdom of Soissons, the kingdom of Paris, the kingdom of Orleans, the kingdom of Metz. Those are all famous towns, but their names scarcely figure at all in Charlemagne's administration. They are eclipsed by the estates of Heristal, Attigny, Kiersy, and Duren.

Charlemagne depended entirely on his own estates for far the greater part of his supplies, and for all that was essential: so true is it that the domain was the principal factor in his administrative organisation. In the political system which resulted from the effort the landowners made to rid themselves of the interference of external power in their estates, it is obvious that taxes were a thing of the past. Apart from the revenue derived from the estate, there were scarcely any recognised dues except what one estate paid to another. Of course Charlemagne had many dues of that sort, but they were paid to him only in his quality of landed proprietor, not in his quality of sovereign; those dues were private, and did not form part of the public funds. Fines payable to the Treasury had almost disappeared, like the taxes, since the king's courts of law had been replaced almost everywhere by those held by the great landowners, even when it was a case of a trial of freemen—that is, of small proprietors who had almost all become transformed into vassals. Taxes originally Roman were still collected from certain towns, but they too had almost all fallen into private hands: one by one the towns had been given to the large domains, in which they were, so to speak, swamped, or had been swallowed up by them, owing to their position of dependence.

Charlemagne's chief income, then, was derived from his estates.

Therefore it is no strange thing to note that he placed the management of his own property at the head of his administrative duties. It shows a wrong grasp of his position to say, as historians generally do, that he did not shrink from bringing his genius to bear upon the details of the manage-

ment of his estates. In so doing he was fulfilling the functions of no less a personage than the Lord of the Treasury, the one important minister in every well-regulated state.

We must not forget that war expenses were not put down to his account. Military service, as we mentioned before, required that all those who were obliged to join the army should serve at their own personal cost.

Charlemagne was really in the position of a great landowner who lived in the country and applied himself to the administration of public affairs: only, instead of having one estate of a few hundred acres, he had more than a hundred estates of an enormous size, as large as provinces; and instead of devoting himself to the interests of a canton, he devoted himself to those of an empire. But the type is the same in both cases. The position he occupied was reflected in the highly characteristic way in which he conducted the things which concerned him most nearly, and in his manner of life at home. We shall gradually come to see that it was strongly marked in his dealings with the Franks, in his methods of public administration, and in all the highest branches of his sovereign government.

The costume he wore every day was that of the ordinary Frank, the "bourgeois" dress of the Germans, and he did not array himself, after the manner of the Merovingians, in the uniform of Roman civil or military dignitaries. And when one day (and it was no idea of his own) he was consecrated emperor, "it was only in Rome at the request of Pope Adrian, in the first place, and subsequently at the entreaties of Pope Leo, his successor, that he allowed himself to be invested in the long tunic, the chlamys, and the sandals of the Roman. At great festivals his dress was embroidered with gold and his buskins with precious stones; a gold clasp secured his short cloak, and he wore on his head a diadem, glittering with gold and jewels; but on ordinary days his dress was simple, and differed but little from that of the people.[1]

As revealed in the organisation of his household, Charlemagne appears as a great and influential landed proprietor, who tried by his example to give an impetus to the country and to society, in a direction in which government could not act, or, at any rate, not with any good result. Literature, art, and science

[1] Eginhard, *Vie de l'Empereur Charles*, chap. xxiii.

were cultivated beneath his roof, and made his home typical of a full and noble existence. His court, after all, merely consisted of his family and intimate friends. His great sources of delight were not pageants, public games and wonderful spectacles, but the comforts and intellectual charms of his home. Contemporaries emulated each other in describing the absolutely unique character of Charlemagne's house, and there is no historian who can resist the pleasure of reproducing that description, so markedly does it differ from that of the great courts of the kings prior to the Carlovingian dynasty. It is a great thing to have perceived the originality of its features; it is still better to grasp their cause. Owing to the formation of his race, Charlemagne looks, when described in his house, very much like a great English lord, enlarged to gigantic proportions. If there is no English lord who is fashioned on such a scale, it is because there are none who own such estates; there are none who have to set the example to such great lords beneath them; there are none who have Charlemagne's genius. But Charlemagne's court was really his *home*, and its magnificence was of that kind which is closely allied to the useful. The most characteristic features of his court, which appear in his private and domestic, rather than in his public life, are similar to those we should expect to find in the home of a great particularist landowner, who has become the leader of his nation.

This helps us to understand Charlemagne's household, with its somewhat homely family ways, its love of education and its scholarly instincts, its positive and serious, as well as its artistic tone; it is nothing more than the home of a great landowner.

Now that we have seen Charlemagne as he lived on his estates and in his "home," let us watch his mode of action with regard to the outer world.

In the first place, he had to deal with the great beneficiaries who were dependent on his domain, great beneficiaries who had perhaps received titles (*honores*) of duke or count, or were plain beneficiaries without titles. Since they were dependents of his domain he made a great point of reminding them of the conditions under which they held their benefices and honours, and of making them observe them. That was the object of

most of the edicts he drew up, which took the form either of general regulations or of special provisions for special occasions—most of them are known as *capitularies*.

But the difficulty was to get these powerful personages to see reason. To achieve that, Charlemagne had only two resources to fall back upon:

1. An embassy of trusted men, true diplomatists, the *missi dominici*, who were charged to bring the matter to as happy a conclusion as possible by methods of persuasion.

2. An appeal to the beneficiaries of the same rank, to the *peers*, to help him, in the first place by persuasion, but, if all else failed, by force, to make the refractory peer observe the duties of beneficiary which he had neglected. No doubt those of the same rank were only too ready to wish their equal to submit to the same obligations as they did, and not to be the only person exempted from them. That constituted the mainspring and the whole mechanism of the "trial and execution by peers."

But it is easy to see that these two methods of government were, in the majority of cases, limited to a moral influence exercised as much as possible upon men who were really rendered almost totally independent by the size and power of their domains. The *missi dominici* were far from always obtaining what Charlemagne wished, and the peers of the refractory vassal found it more convenient, as often as not, to make common cause with him, and try to win exemption from the same obligations of vassalage as he was opposing. Charlemagne and still more his successors, were continually making concessions of that sort, which were extorted from them by the vassals, whom an overmastering desire for independence impelled to join hands spontaneously against public authority.

In this point too—and it is worthy of note—Charlemagne's government resembles that of a great landowner, whose whole strength lies in his domain, but who, once he is outside his own property, is obliged to come to terms with the other landowners, who follow close behind him on the road to sovereign emancipation, which he was the first to reach.

Therein lies the explanation of another feature of the capitularies: in a number of cases they are merely friendly resolutions—as, for instance, the capitularies drawn up on the Champ de Mai; and the capitularies concerning ecclesi-

astical matters; likewise the capitularies which modified in some degree certain customs of ancient date, known as Barbarian Laws. In the framing of such capitularies as these Charlemagne did not take the same part as he did in drawing up the previous ones, in which case he acted as a lord with landed estates who was dealing with great beneficiaries who had more or less forgotten their obligations towards him, but he acted as president of the General Assembly of Frankish landowners and their vassals, or as chairman of occasional meetings both ecclesiastical and secular. He was a supremely great landowner, who presided over meetings and announced the resolutions that had been passed under his presidency.

That was the origin of that parliamentary tendency which was exhibited by the government in a marked degree, not only after the accession of Pepin and Charlemagne, but in the last years of the Merovingians, when the system of vassalage had caused such enormous advances to be made towards the emancipation of the landowners from the royal *truste*. Whatever power the prince might have possessed owing to his wealth or his own capacities, he was aware that he was no more than *primus inter pares*.

At the same time that Charlemagne was trying to maintain his rights as a lord of landed estates in relation to the beneficiaries of his domains, and preside over meetings where affairs of public interest were discussed, he tried to prevent those of the small landowners who still remained independent from being absorbed by the great landowners. In so doing he followed the tradition by which royalty was made the protector of freemen who did not come under the protection of the lords. Other capitularies had this object in view; but they met with almost as little success as those which were intended to enforce the obligations of the beneficiaries. In fact, the two series of capitularies aimed at putting a spoke in the wheel of the feudal movement—that is, the advance of the power of the great landowners and the protection of the small proprietors by the great rather than by the king. In this matter Charlemagne was in the position of the man who is the first to scale the citadel of power, just as in the assault of a town the man who is once safely in the citadel turns round upon his followers and says to them: "Come no farther;

there's no room for more. Let each man keep his rank in order of battle." It is a case of what we should nowadays call "shaking competitors off the ladder."

Many capitularies, again, simply formulated certain practices and principles which had already been observed for a considerable time. In a sense they were the written expression of customs: as, for instance, the capitularies publishing the Barbarian Laws, as well as the greater part of the capitularies dealing with military service, a thing which it was no easy task to alter, as we know, but which Charlemagne attempted to systematise. It is clear from all these facts that the capitularies are far from being the expression of omnipotence.

There are even some which are merely memoranda, personal notes of some subject that was being studied—such, for instance, as the capitulary bearing this question: "How comes it that every man appears so reluctant to help his neighbour?" Expressions such as these seem to reveal the thoughts of a man who was pre-eminently absorbed by public affairs: similar expressions might be found in the notes of a great landowner, a man of some weight in public matters.

Such, then, was his action in the outside world, such was Charlemagne's government outside his own domain, on national territory in times of peace. In looking at this side of Charlemagne's life, we can never forget that his position was essentially that of a large landowner who was master in his own house, but merely influential as regarded those outside it.

It was Charlemagne's personal courage, his genius, which was able to use that influence so as to produce such wonderful results: all historians are agreed about that. It is very striking how few changes Charlemagne introduced; but he had a marvellous power of knowing how to take the lead successfully in things which he could not alter. That explains why this excellent government came to an end immediately after his death.

It remains for us to see what course of action this great landowner adopted with regard to war or from the military point of view.

Setting aside the men who belonged to him, whom he raised from his own domain but who were few relatively to the whole population, and setting aside the small landowners,

who were still free from vassalage and served directly under him in his quality of king, his immediate army was composed only of *barons*—that is to say, of great landowners who had their own army of vassals at their command. Therefore when Charlemagne summoned his army, all he really did was to summon the "barons."

The vassals took an oath, in virtue of their tenure, to serve their baron, but did not swear directly to serve the king. Charlemagne and his successors tried for a long time to get every vassal to swear an oath directly to the king independently of his oath to the baron. It was a long and very difficult task. A series of compromises were at first accepted—as, for instance, the oath to serve the baron except against the king, which did not imply a promise to serve the king even if the baron did not, and much less to serve the king against the baron.

The expenses of the armies and the cost of the war were defrayed by the combatants, the barons and their vassals.

It was impossible for the combatants, who were all landowners, to be other than mounted, seeing that they so often had to go very long distances to get within striking distance of the enemy, and that there was no public military organisation. Everything that they needed, and all the people they required, had to follow in their train. Those landowners who through some immunity or another were exempted from military service, especially the monasteries, furnished, instead, chariots called *basterna*. They were chariots covered with impenetrable skins and usually drawn by oxen. Such and such an abbey—of Corbie, or of any other place, for instance—had to contribute fifty oxen with their harness. Like the great captain he was, Charlemagne succeeded in getting this host of people to follow him; but he did so only by a peculiar personal gift, similar to that possessed by Cæsar or Napoleon. His fame on the battlefield is well known: legends describe him as receiving the submission of cities which the mere news of his near encampment drove distracted. The camp was really formed only by degrees as the barons arrived one by one at the appointed place in sight of the enemy, or at any rate at the frontier.

But Charlemagne's success in being able to raise an army

of this description often enough was largely due to the widespread feeling of the danger of invasion to which Frankish territory was at that time exposed: all these wars were in reality national wars. So powerful an influence had this feeling over the barons that they soon made a formal stipulation that they would not follow the king "except in the case of a national war." Moreover, here too, as well as in peace, we see the formation, or rather the growth, of the parliamentary system, which had its birth at the time of the decadence of the Merovingians: there was the same necessity as in peace, for coming to a parley with landowners who were powerful, able, and eager for independence.

The barons, then, were summoned to meet on the Champ de Mai, and sometimes, too, at other seasons; for Charlemagne managed to get them to serve in fifty-four campaigns! It was no longer the "Field of March," but the "Field of May," because, since the army was entirely mounted, it was necessary to defer the campaign till the season when the grass began to grow again. The Chronicles of Eginhard showed us how numerous were the meetings of the General Assembly before war, and near the hostile frontier. At these assemblies Charlemagne deliberated with the barons on the proposed expedition; and the faithful historian brings out very clearly that the decisions of the great chief were not made without the support of the Assembly: "After having summoned the General Assembly at Worms, Charles resolved to make war upon Saxony (772). He decided, after having held the Assembly at Worms, to march against the Saxons with all speed (776), etc."

So, in war as in peace, the same note was always struck, the same system of government was employed: *Primus inter pares*, the first landowner concerted measures with the rest.

Under this new system, the territory which the Frankish band and the Merovingian army had brought under the influence of the particularist family was tremendously increased; there were three extensions of territory which it is important to distinguish:

1. The extension among the Old Germans. Clovis, Dagobert, and others had begun the extension on that side, as we saw; Charlemagne completed it chiefly in Bavaria and among

the Lombards; afterwards among the Visigoths in Northern Spain. It is interesting to note under this head that the Franks both before Charlemagne and under him carried not only their arms, but also something of their social organisation, into the land of the Old Germans. The codes of the Bavarians, the Lombards, the Visigoths, like those of the Alemanni, were "drawn up"—that is to say, put into working order and set out in writing—at the instance of the Frankish kings. It is noteworthy that private Frankish institutions were introduced into them as far as possible. For instance, it is a certain fact that in the Code of the Alemanni was inserted, mainly under the influence of the bishops, a regulation concerning a system of serfdom not unlike that organised by the Franks on their estates. There is nothing unnatural, therefore, in finding purely Frankish customs among the Old Germans who had been conquered by and absorbed into other tribes. Historians make a mistake in supposing, as they sometimes do, that the Old Germans themselves, or all the German tribes in general, originated institutions which really reached them only through the Franks and Neo-Germans. There is no difficulty in proving that the systematic organisation of serfs and vassals on the Frankish domain became weaker and weaker in proportion to the distance from its original source—namely, Austrasia—and in proportion as the Frankish domination was less marked and less durable.

Charlemagne's arms, then, extended the territory of the particularist family among the Old Germans, as far as the Ebro, all over the valley of the Rhine and into the upper basin of the Danube.

2. The extension among non-Germanic peoples. Two peoples should be noted. In the first place, the *Slavs*: the Carlovingian army could do no more than get booty from them (and, in the camp of the Avars, the pillaging was worthy of Homer), and afterwards stipulate for a tribute, for they were not sedentary. They were called *tributary* tribes. In the second place, the Greeks, or rather the Romans of the time of the decadence of the empire, in Italy properly so called: among them Charlemagne found something analogous to what Clovis found on entering the *Imperium Romanum*, the ancient centre of Celtic Gaul, which had remained purely Gallo-Roman.

On the 25th of December in the year 800 the Roman people, over whom the popes had for a long time held the position of "defenders" in the full sense of the term, conferred upon Charlemagne the title of Roman emperor. There is indeed something magnificent in that coronation scene of Emperor Charles. The results of that act fell far short of the expectations of the people of Rome and the sovereign pontiff, but it was the expression of a fact of immense importance: the power of the Romans had finally disappeared before a great landowner sprung from the shores of the North Sea, and it disappeared before the power of the private estate! And, by a coincidence which is worth noting in so far as it helps to emphasise this great fact, the name of this Northman was the very one by which those emigrants from the Gothic peasants were called, those founders of the particularist family and of the independent estate: he was called "Karl"—that is to say, "the peasant," in Gothic language.[1]

It is certainly very fine to see the triumph of the particularist family, that great social phenomenon, expressed so unexpectedly in the coronation of Charlemagne as emperor.

As for this imperial dignity, it had no effect upon the social constitution of the Franks. The feudal system under Charlemagne and his successors completed the structure which he had begun to rear upon the foundation of the complete independence of the estate.

3. The expansion among the Saxons. This reveals an important and highly characteristic fact—namely, the determined assault of a mother country by those who had emigrated from it, and its surrender. How often in history do we not read of former emigrants returning in a similar way!

The war against the Saxons is extremely interesting. That tribe of humble people defended its independence inflexibly. Every time it was defeated it bowed its head for an instant. Its leader, Witikind, took refuge in Odin's ancient country, in Denmark; then he returned, after the manner of Odinid warriors, to rouse the people to fresh action. Every time he came back, they began war anew; every time he went away, they ceased; but at bottom they never yielded. It was not long before that Saxon country became, as we shall see, the

[1] See the *Chanson de Rig* in the Sagas.

heart of Germany, and was separated from France. Charlemagne knew the Saxons well enough not to wish to make them adopt altogether the organisation of the great Frankish estate, which was the product of the rich lands of Gaul. With the object of shutting in that indomitable people, he established bishoprics in the country, instead of great lay estates. The power of the bishops presented a different aspect from that which a purely civil and political domination would have done. Besides, Charles relied upon the fidelity of the bishops more than upon that of the secular lords. Finally, he was undeceived about benefices, when he saw all of them gradually becoming hereditary; whereas by founding bishoprics he was better able to interfere at each succession so as to get his own man put in, someone who was worthy of his work.

Charlemagne probably exercised a very different kind of power over all these various conquered lands from that which he exercised in the midst of the Franks. Over the other tribes his power was that of a king, though it took different forms.

But the system of the great sovereign estate was soon about to swamp everything, and far from seeing a second Charlemagne performing the functions either of a great landowner or of a king (according to the land under his sway), we shall see nothing but a republic of great estates which considers sovereign power simply as one of the natural attributes of private property.

CHAPTER XI

THE FEUDAL SYSTEM

PART II—THE DECLINE OF THE CARLOVINGIANS

CHARLEMAGNE, as we saw, showed his genius in playing the part of the leading Frankish landowner.

He had to be content with that rôle.

Yet everything seemed destined to bring about the restoration of the antique form of power, with him at its head: his genius, his immense wealth, his army for the national defence which included all the troops in the land, his military fame, the tribes he conquered, which were accustomed to royal domination, finally his title of emperor. But all these numerous and powerful supports were as nothing in the face of the resistance of the great landowners, who were absolute masters on their own estates. Not only did they preserve their independence, but it is clear that they forced Charlemagne's hand more than once, by strength of numbers.

So there is nothing astonishing in what happened at the death of the illustrious Charles. When his great personality was no more, the illusion faded, and the old state of things, which had really never ceased to be, returned: each of the lords with landed property reigned as a sovereign on his own estate. To deal with foreign affairs they leagued themselves together as necessity dictated, just as independent princes would do. There was no one who could take the place of the mighty leader who had had the gift of making them follow him, and had been aided by favourable circumstances.

This inevitable crisis has been incorrectly termed the decline of the Carlovingian Empire. In reality the empire came to an end with Charlemagne, and there was no decline except that of the family and the estate of the Carlovingians.

It is easy to understand their decline. It was inevitable that the first of Charlemagne's successors who should lack his personal gifts, and nevertheless claimed to play the part of leader, should fail to get the great landowners, or even a few of them, to follow him, except by winning them to his side by fresh concessions of land. In this way it was not long before the family of Heristal was completely despoiled of its estates. But the influence vanished with the estates; the part was played out; the Carlovingians ceased to exist.

The first concession that was forced upon Charlemagne's successors was the formal and explicit abandonment of the right of reclaiming the benefices at the death of their occupant, or of shifting honours—that is to say, the titles of duke and count—from one domain to another. This was the official confirmation for good and all of the heredity of all estates that had hitherto been granted only in usufruct. It had previously required great cleverness to get the usufruct extended to the next generation. This revolution had begun a long time before, but was consummated by a capitulary of Charles the Bald, drawn up on his estate of Kiersy-sur-Oise in 877.

The name of benefice—that is to say, the enjoyment of an estate for life—naturally fell out of use, and the name of *fief* was definitively used in its stead. Fief, then, meant the land held hereditarily by a man who paid homage, swore an oath of fealty, and bound himself to perform the duties of a vassal. Thence came the name of feudalism as applied to the system then definitely established.

But the Capitulary of Kiersy was not altogether a bad thing for Charlemagne's family; after all, it was merely the ratification and generalisation of a fact that was all but established before.

The most fatal thing for that family was the necessity of securing the adhesion of their partisans by making them fresh gifts of land, granting them portions of that immense domain which Charlemagne had reserved in its entirety, as the foundation of his position.

The necessity for retaining their partisans at this heavy cost was enormously increased by the dissensions of Charlemagne's descendants, who claimed the right, each one on his own account, of carrying on the part played by their famous ancestor. So

much competition must have led to any amount of bargaining.

The concessions of land belonging to the reserve domain did not cease until Robert the Strong and his family caused all the land that remained in the possession of the last of the Carlovingians to be conceded to him, little by little, beginning by the duchy of France and ending by the town of Laon (from 861 to 944).

That is a summary of the "Decline of the Carlovingians"; again we see that it is really the history of the estate.

The great fact which comes into evidence at that time, and is very significant, is the *thorough isolation* of each of the large estates.

The isolation of the estate—that was the very thing which played so important a part in the social system which gave rise to the particularist form of society among the Scandinavian fishermen and the Saxon peasants, and the very same thing occurs among the great Frankish landowners. After so many vicissitudes, the leading characteristic of the particularist family does not belie itself. The particularist family loves the isolation of the estate; it is the foundation of its social system. So, after the disappearance of the Merovingian *truste*, after the disappearance of Charlemagne's personality, we shall again find on the rich lands of the interior, what we invariably found on the shores of the North Sea and on the poor lands of the Saxon plain: namely, that each domain not only has an independent existence, but is as isolated as an independent state.

That is the marked characteristic of the feudal system at its best period, between the end of Charlemagne's rule and the first advances towards power of the Capetian kings, from 814 to 1202. That is—to restrict it still further—the characteristic of the tenth and eleventh centuries, which form the centre of this period, when the successors of Charlemagne had been formally repulsed (887, the deposition of Charles the Fat), and the predecessors of Philip Augustus had not yet come forward (1128, Louis VI. and the commune of Laon).

The isolation of the domains cut short the "history of great events" during the tenth and eleventh centuries, whence came the idea of the "darkness of the Middle Ages" and of the "chaos of feudalism," an allusion to the isolated life of the little feudal

states. But that is a totally wrong way of representing things. There is no darkness and chaos except in the minds of those who are ignorant of the social organisation of that time, who cannot see anything clearly, and therefore think everything must be in confusion at a period when no more "impressive historical dramas" were being enacted. The saying, "Happy is the people that has no history," shows a better understanding of social truth. We shall verify this statement by taking the case of the peoples who lived on Frankish territory in the tenth and eleventh centuries. Those two so-called "iron" centuries were the greatest and happiest of any. The next chapter, containing our final piece of evidence, will elucidate this point.

First let us consider the isolation of the estates.

The institutions of royalty and of empire, which we picture to ourselves as the central points of feudalism in the Middle Ages, because we only look at them in the light of their restoration in modern times, held so small a place, effected so little in the social organisation on which the life of feudalism depended, that those two great titles were completely abandoned when Charlemagne's family became extinct. On this side of the Rhine the family of Robert the Strong, who, owing to his possession of the Isle of France and of Orleanais, played a part analogous to that of Mayor of the Palace at the court of the Carlovingians, on several occasions spurned the title of king, which it could easily have appropriated; and when Hugh Capet finally decided to adopt it, it did not as a matter of fact bring with it the submission of any of the great neighbouring landowners: his power remained narrowly confined within his own estate. On the other side of the Rhine no one took the title of emperor when the descendants of Charlemagne disappeared from there too (from 899 to 936). A little later it was decided to readopt it, but with the precaution of not making it hereditary, and of electing as emperors the great landowners who had the smallest states, in order to completely nullify the effect of the imperial title.

That meant the real triumph of feudalism: the annihilation of royalty and of empire.

The result is that it is difficult to follow the traces—and they are mere traces—of the ancient institution of monarchy or empire through that period. There are few historians who

do not get discouraged over the thankless task of putting forward as a succession of kings and emperors a series of persons who had no kind of efficient power.

Royalty and empire had, as a matter of fact, ceased to exist, and even the titles of those great institutions fell into disrepute and oblivion. Hugh Capet in the small town of Noyon gave himself the title of "King of the Gauls, the Bretons, the Normans, the Aquitainians, the Goths, the Spaniards, and the Gascons," in much the same way as the princes of Savoy bore the title of King of Cyprus and Jerusalem. The legendary colloquy between the first of the Capetians and Adalbert, Count of Périgord, "Who made you a count?"—"Who made you king?" has remained the classical expression of the state of things at that time.

We have no need to be further convinced that the spirit of feudalism depended on resistance to the idea of royalty: that is the trait which predominates in our mind after closely following the history of this long period, Even several centuries after the time when Adalbert of Périgueux could say, "Who made you king?" Enguerrand III., a plain lord of the manor of Coucy, said as proudly, "Neither king, nor prince, nor duke, nor even count am I: I am the sire of Coucy!"

We must not allow ourselves to be deceived by the appearances of the hierarchic system of organisation of feudalism. The great landowners were supposed to be dependent on the king. In reality they only depended on themselves. The whole trend of their history is in that direction: from the time of the Merovingians to the publication of the Capitulary of Kiersy, what else did they do but emancipate themselves from royalty?

It is said that during this period feudalism continued to strengthen its organisation, to make its relations more definite, to formulate its laws: but what really became better organised, more definite, and better formulated, were the means for securing the increasing independence and the more and more complete isolation of the great landowners. That was undoubtedly the direction taken by feudalism.

Look at the two famous Assemblies of Mersen (847) and Kiersy (877): they were the last, and when they were over no one any longer felt the same desire for holding conferences

and forming coalitions, but each man went off to enjoy the risks and dangers of his independence. The stipulation there made was that the landowners should only follow the king against a foreigner, and that they should judge for themselves whether the enemy were a foreigner; finally, that they should choose their own heirs.

How is it, then, that we find the custom of doing homage still continuing among the great landowners after they have reached their well-defined position of absolute independence?

It is important to understand this point. The great landowners had bound all their tenants, or the small proprietors who had become their vassals, to their domain by a contract of allegiance and homage. They held it, therefore, of extreme importance that the contract should be considered binding and immutable. And as they themselves, at the time when their independence was not yet absolute, had accepted the contract between themselves and the king, they continued to make it compulsory in order to prevent the principle of it being contested. But there was this enormous difference between the case of the great landowners and the small proprietors who were bound to them and that of the king and the great landowners that the king had not the power to make the great landowners observe their contract of allegiance and homage, whilst the great landowners used their power for the very purpose of making the small proprietors observe the contracts of allegiance and homage they had made with their overlords. There are plenty of facts to illustrate this point. Consider, for instance, the spirit in which victorious Rollo accepted the obligation of swearing the oath of fealty and of paying homage to Charles the Simple: he certainly had no intention of following that miserable king, but he applied the feudal system so rigidly in Normandy that his duchy there soon became its most regular type. Moreover, since the landowners simply swore to follow the king in the case of national war only, and when they themselves considered it national, it is obvious that the king could expect no help from them in the establishment of his power within his dominions: and so the contract amounted to nothing at all.

The real situation is revealed in hundreds of ways.

During the tenth and eleventh centuries we find the king

absolutely confined within his domain, where he simply played the same part as the great landowners did on their own estates.

He used his strength to force the small proprietors to do their duty towards him as his dependents: that was the cause of those numberless small wars round Paris.

He attempted to get back into his power the right of choosing successors for the domains that reverted to him, not in his quality of king but of relation: that brought about the Burgundian war.

The weakness of his position, too, is visible even when he played the part of a private man; for more than once he was unable to gain his point without securing the alliance of some great neighbouring landowner more vigorous than himself. I say by securing an alliance, not by calling upon the landowner to perform his feudal service. The Count of Vermandois and the Duke of Normandy, whom it pleased to come and fight for him, stated very clearly that they did not do so because they were bound to, but simply out of goodwill and in virtue of a private contract: in fact, they were not national wars. And the moment that the Count of Vermandois and the Duke of Normandy retired, the king was defeated.

This, then, is all that the bond between the king and the great landowners meant: nothing.

In addition to military service, which was reduced to what I have just described, there were two obligations to which the vassal was bound by the contract of allegiance and homage; they had no more effect than the former upon the great landowners and the king. The two obligations were to aid the king with counsel when he asked for it, and to come to the trial by peers convoked by the suzerain—that is to say, to come to the trial of those who were in the same position of vassalage as themselves relatively to the king. Now, I beg everyone of sense to consider whether the king would not think twice before asking advice of such embarrassing personages as those great dignitaries. And as for the trial by peers, it is obvious that the vassal who considered himself strong enough to neglect his duties towards the king, would have arranged beforehand to avoid appearing before the peers; he was prepared to repulse the king and the peers by force. More-

over, the peers on their side were inclined to absolve him and forsake the king in nine cases out of ten. These facts constantly recurred.

Thus, out of the three feudal obligations called service, *fiance*, and justice, or else *ost*, *cour*, and *plaid* (*exercitus*, *curtis*, *placitum*), there was not a single one which was seriously fulfilled by the great landowners in their relations to the king, for the very good reason that the great landowners were so powerful that there was no authority strong enough to force them to fulfil their obligations. So, when we speak of the organisation of the feudal system, we must take care to apply to the great landowners the fable of the fly which passes through the meshes of the spider's web by reason of its size. In theory, the system was organised so as to maintain a certain relation between the great landowners and the king: we saw the reason for that just now. In reality, the system only worked effectively in the case of those below the great landowners: history proves it.

Feudalism, then, in spite of the existence of the title of royalty, was really a republic of great domains, which were absolutely independent of royalty and of one another.

There was no other bond of cohesion between the great landowners, except that of the peerage—that is to say, that they promised the king to help their peers. But this obligation, like that of helping the king himself, was limited to the case of national war, and was equally ineffective for the same reasons. It was only another form of the obligation to follow the king in the same case. Supposing that one of the peers was obliged to defend himself against a foreign army without waiting for the king, the peers were supposed to go to his assistance of their own accord.

Once that the complete independence of the great landowners in relation to the king and to each other is thoroughly understood, the history of the Middle Ages up to the twelfth century appears quite normal in its development. Each great landowner acted like a sovereign in his own domain, and made what special and temporary associations he could. It was the system of the particularist family over again, used for the benefit of the great landowners, and exhibiting the same characteristics of independence and isolation on the estate, and the

same use of transitory associations for special objects, according as necessity demanded.

All this, then, is simply another chapter in the continuous history of the particularist family, and a direct development of its institutions: on the shores of the North Sea it created the estate out of narrow strips of land, and obtained some support from seacoast fishing, and that estate became of sovereign importance; on the barren lands of the Saxon plain the particularist family created the small estate and made it of sovereign power; finally, on the rich lands on both banks of the Rhine it created the large estate and made it of sovereign power.

I took the left bank of the Rhine as the scene of this development because in France we are more familiar with that region, but exactly the same thing took place on the right bank.

I mentioned above that the titles of king and emperor met with very much the same fates: the title of king was retained on the left bank because of the memory of Clovis, who lived in Neustria; the title of emperor remained on the right bank because of the memory of Charlemagne, who lived in Austrasia by preference, and extended his conquests chiefly into Saxony, Bavaria, and Eastern Germany.

And now that we once more see before us the political organisation peculiar to the particularist family, hostile to every kind of system of public control which is not its own creation, now that we see before us the sovereign domain as surely as when we saw it at its birth in Norway and in the Saxon plain, let us return to a question which is connected with that of the expansion and evolution of the particularist type, the question of means of transport. Though the means of transport changed, they still exhibited one of the same characteristics, which was the outcome of isolation—namely, a paucity of organised means of transport and a mediocrity in the ordinary means used. Instead of walking, or riding on a farm-horse, methods of locomotion which in the Saxon plain took the place of sailing which was used in Norway, people now drove in cars drawn by oxen, or rode on war-horses: the change was due to the difference between rich lands and poor, the large estate and the small. The Frankish estate, as we said, was rich and military in contrast to the Saxon estate:

therefore people drove in cars drawn by oxen instead of going on foot, and rode war-horses instead of farm-horses. But in spite of the superiority, from a technical point of view, of the two Frankish means of transport, the part played by the means of transport was practically the same in everyday life: each estate isolated its inhabitants.

Let us go back a little way in the history of our means of transport, starting from the Saxon plain and the Frankish band.

Just as the ancient political system and the new existed at first side by side on Frankish soil, and then took each its own road, so the ancient system of transports and the new first went on side by side, and then each took its own course.

The Merovingians received the Roman roads as part of their inheritance, as they did the forms of Roman government. They mainly used the roads for marching the soldiers to the conquest of the country and for keeping it under their domination.

Gregory of Tours states that it was the estates and churches bordering on the Roman roads which suffered in the transit of the soldiers who had been levied *en masse*, and that explains the tendency exhibited by large landowners, as well as by monasteries, to procure domains in out-of-the-way places that were called "wild."

The Roman roads enabled the Merovingian to keep in easy touch with his counts in each city. But just as the Merovingian in reality inherited only the forms of Roman government, so he did not make more than a superficial use of the "Roman road": he did not possess, any more than did the Romans of the decadence, what made that institution a living force among the Romans. The result was that the Roman roads were neglected, and became daily worse and worse.

Brunehaut won herself a fame, which has lasted from century to century, by taking the trouble to repair some broken portions of those famous roads. Brunehaut's highways have been multiplied in the imagination of posterity.

These roads were supposed to be kept up by means of tolls. The Merovingians and their counts were very anxious to keep up the tolls; they did more, they tried several times to increase them. But I need scarcely say that the money collected at the toll gates was not used for the maintenance of the roads. I even make a slight mistake in speaking of money, for the

tolls were probably deductions made in kind from the merchandise that passed by. Now, is it likely that these deductions in kind escaped being consumed on the spot or being used in the count's small local traffic ?

But the Frankish landowner revolted against the government of the Merovingians when the question of tolls arose, as he did on all questions of taxes. He used the same method he always used, and succeeded in getting immunities granted him : the merchandise he carried was exempted from the toll dues. Such immunities abound among the papers left by the Merovingians.

He could even do better : he could obtain the right of collecting the tolls of such and such a bridge, town, etc., for his own benefit. The Merovingians gave numbers of such grants, and the Carlovingians gave all that remained to be given.

But when protestations were made on all sides, injunctions were issued from the palace to the counts, from time to time, forbidding them to create any more new tolls.

In the end the same thing happened to the tolls as to the other sovereign dues : the great landowners first got exemption from them, then appropriated them, and levied them upon the public. They made the toll dues at the entrance to towns, at river-crossings, at harbours, etc., into rights attached to the land, to the domain, like everything else.

The great landowners, who were very anxious not to pay tolls, and were content to receive them, were not, however, very zealous in keeping up the roads. It was not only that a policy of neglect seemed to them economical, but that the interests of the estate did not impel them to do otherwise. We know how the vast estates were divided into an infinite number of small tenures, each of which answered to the needs of one family. Public means of transport, then, were in nowise necessary to the working and to the life of the domain ; but, furthermore, it was essential to the interests of the domain that nothing should go out of it. That was the condition of absolute independence, of solitary, self-contained life.

" Commerce," says Pigeonneau, " was almost entirely suspended during two centuries. Society under the feudal system was organised in such a way that each of the little

states of which the kingdom of France was composed was self-sufficient, and was obliged to depend on its neighbours to the least possible extent. Rye, wheat, barley, and vegetables, which formed the staple food, were grown everywhere; even vines were cultivated in regions where they could only produce mediocre results, and where they ceased to be grown when commercial facilities were increased—that is to say, in Normandy, in Brittany, and even as far as Picardy; every peasant, serf, or freeholder had his poultry-yard, his pig-sty, his stable, which was large enough to hold a few goats and one or two cows.

"In return for a small payment, the cattle were allowed to graze in the meadows, on the heaths, or in the copses, which formed, so to speak, the common property of the fief. The lord usually fed enormous flocks of sheep there, whose wool the women spun and used for weaving clothes. The woods belonging to the lord provided wood for carpentry as well as for burning. The tithes (in kind), the field rents, the dues which the lords and the churches levied on the cultivator, and which gradually accumulated in the barns and cellars of the castle or of the abbey, provided the lord of the manor, his family and servants, the abbot and his monks, with food; they also formed the food-supply in times of war, when the peasants were obliged to take refuge in the castle; they were a reserve against a bad harvest.

"Far from thinking of depriving himself of these precious resources for the benefit of his neighbours, the lord had only one care, *to prevent his men from exporting the produce of his fief*, especially such as was indispensable for the defence, security, and actual life of the population which he employed—corn, drinks, cattle, horses, wool, flax, hemp.

"The fief had its mill, its wine-press, its common oven, likewise its common storehouses.

"It was the same with industry as with agriculture. Each fief tried to produce the commodities and the raw material necessary for alimentation, clothing, and transport; each fief aimed at having its own manufacturers for producing the prime necessaries—its carpenter, its mason, its potter, its smith, its armourer, its weaver, its tailor." [1]

[1] Pigeonneau, *Histoire du Commerce de la France*, vol. i. p. 91, etc.

The fate of the towns, which, after all, lived only by commerce, can be imagined. They gravitated cumbrously round the country fiefs, and were held of so little account in the organisation of the land that historians find it impossible to say what went on within them, how they were governed, the kind of life their inhabitants led, and the kind of occupations they pursued.

This was, indeed, the complete triumph of the rural domain; and what a complete contrast with the state of things under the Gallo-Romans, when everything radiated from the town! The Frankish emigrant had brought about a revolution in the social system!

We now understand how the ample liberty of movement in the Roman world and its extraordinary facilities for communication were replaced in the ordinary and logical course of things, and not in a process of decay, by the isolation of the domains and the absence of means of communication.

In the economic organisation of the Frankish estate it is clear that there was no place for the town, the ordinary small market of the neighbourhood; everyone provided for his everyday wants for himself on his own estate.

But that accumulation of produce on the premises to which we alluded just now gave rise in the end to a surplus stock which the owner was glad to exchange, after a certain time, for whatever he lacked in the midst of that abundance of necessaries, or even for novel commodities from abroad which might tempt him. Consequently, a quite peculiar centre of commerce took the place of the town at this period of the formation and domination of the feudal system—namely, the *Fair*.

Just as in the isolation of the steppe, markets for the wandering tribes were held at long intervals at places to which religious pilgrimages were made, so in the isolation of the estates, with their stable particularist families, fairs were organised near places which were frequented at definite times for religious purposes.

The type of these feudal fairs was the famous fair "du Landit" (low Latin, *indictum* = fixed, determined), held on the estate of the Abbey of St. Denis; and before that, the fair of St. Denis held at the same place and subsequently transferred

to Paris, which was quite near. The fair of Troyes in Champagne figured beside these fairs in the first rank.

It is interesting to find that all these fairs tried to traffic with the north, which had hitherto remained very much cut off from all the commercial centres. The success of the fairs of St. Denis and Champagne was due to the fact that there were good lines of approach to them from the north. The south, with its abundance of recherché produce cleared the most distant heights round the basin of the Mediterranean in order to come as far as the great plains which communicated with the north.

The fairs of St. Denis and of Troyes in Champagne were the rendezvous for people coming from all parts of Europe. Beside the wines and oil of the south were seen the honey and wax of Armorica, the cloths and madder-root of Neustria, the metals of Spain and England, the furs of the north, the wools of Friesland, spices, pepper, silk and cotton fabrics, jewels, enamels, gold and silver work from the east, which came *viâ* the ports of the Mediterranean, or more rarely by the route of the Danube, and were brought chiefly by the Jews, called Syrians; parchments sought after by the monasteries, etc.[1]

The upheavals caused by attending the fairs, which were only held very occasionally, did not in the least disturb the isolation of the estate. The feudal lords did great service to the fairs by withdrawing the usual tolls in the case of goods going to the fairs, and by being responsible for the safety of the merchants and their merchandise while they crossed their fiefs.

It would seem at first sight as if the transit of goods and men in times of war must have interfered far more with the isolation of the estate: in Charlemagne's suite, as we saw, immense files of chariots drawn by oxen and war-horses went as far as the Ebro and the Volturno, half-way up the Danube and as far as the Elbe: in Spain, Italy, Germany, and Saxony. But we know, too, that after Charlemagne's death the great landowners put stringent regulations upon those enterprises, and solemnly stipulated that they would not follow the king except in expeditions which they considered of national importance, or, to put it plainly, which they considered would

[1] Pigeonneau, *Histoire du Commerce de la France.*

really be to their own interest. Consequently, we no longer find the kings in the tenth and eleventh centuries undertaking expeditions like those of Charlemagne, however much they may have desired to do so.

We have now thoroughly established the *Independence* and *Isolation* of the great estates.

It remains for us to consider what were their results : whether good or bad. From them we shall be able to form an opinion as to the results produced by feudalism at its zenith—that is to say, in the tenth and eleventh centuries.

CHAPTER XII

THE FEUDAL SYSTEM

PART III—THE ZENITH OF FEUDALISM

WE have seen that as soon as the particularist form of society won the day in the rich lands of the interior, the same phenomenon as we observed on the fish-frequented shores of Norway and on the barren moors of the Saxon plain unmistakably presented itself—namely, the isolated domain, resembling in its absolute independence a sovereign state. Only, among the Franks it was a great manorial estate, whereas with the seacoast fishermen of Norway it was an estate composed of tiny strips of land, while with the Saxon peasants it was a small estate.

The direct effect of the isolation of the seigneurial domain upon commercial transports was to reduce them very largely: that phenomenon too was the same as occurred in Norway and in the Saxon plain, but in this matter, as in others, the proportions were necessarily different, as in one case the estates were large and almost like so many countries, and in the other small and scattered.

So much we know from the preceding chapters. It remains for us to investigate the military transports: there again we shall come across some startling phenomena.

As soon as the all-powerful domains had secured absolute isolation, the military transports had to submit to the same law as the commercial transports: they were reduced to the simplest possible form.

Military organisation then assumed two forms. Both forms were new; they were employed simultaneously and differed from each other very much. There was the military organisation for the defence of the domain, and the military organisation for expeditions outside the domain.

Let us begin by taking the expeditions outside the domain: their relation to the question of transports is more obvious; besides, their organisation is less unlike the military organisation with which we are already acquainted. At the very outset, however, we shall discover that we have to do with a system very different from that which Charlemagne adopted on his great expeditions.

Under Charlemagne the term of military service exacted from the owners of allodial estates—that is to say, the independent men—and from the beneficiaries was three months, reckoned from the moment of arrival at the rendezvous in face of the enemy. All the time it took to reach the rendezvous across the great Frankish Empire did not count in the term of service. At the end of the three months, if the landowners or beneficiaries consented to continue the war, it was no longer carried on at their expense, but at that of the king or emperor. In fact, Charlemagne fought almost continuously from the spring to the autumn: he made amends to the barons and their followers for the prolongation of their term of service by gifts of the booty and land which they had captured, and which also served to defray his own expenses.

But, under Charlemagne's incapable successors, the landowners and beneficiaries, who were no longer distinguished from each other and were equally possessors of fiefs, seem to have unanimously reduced the obligatory term of feudal military service to forty days. And these forty days were reckoned from the day of departure from home, not from the day of arrival in face of the enemy. Now, since the sovereign who summoned his vassals to arms was not in a position to offer them hopes of getting anything like the same amount of booty on his small expeditions as they got under Charlemagne, in nine cases out of ten the vassals left him at the end of forty days, quietly turned their backs on the enemy, and took the road home to their domain.

There is certainly a considerable difference between these two laws or customs, and especially between the two ways of carrying them out: on the one side, it was really a case of almost six months of military service each year; on the other, it was almost absolutely impossible to keep a force against the

enemy for more than a month when the time necessary for reaching the scene of battle was deducted.

The phenomenon that then presented itself—namely, that feudal independence tended to reduce military service—seems quite contrary to what we usually imagine to be the case.

However, it really contains nothing surprising. In the first place, it was the natural and logical result of independence. It was also the continuation of a chain of facts which we have watched being shaped according to a definite law, and which resulted from causes now known to us. Let us pick up the chain at a few points :

1. Did we not notice that as soon as the Franks provided themselves with domains, they abandoned the soldier's profession from the time of the establishment of the Merovingians at Paris ?

2. Did we not find that, sooner than yield to the levies *en masse*, they allowed themselves to be fined ?

3. Did we not see how they saved almost the whole of the working class from military service by making them return to the position of serfs, from which the majority of them had escaped owing to the spread of Christian ideas concerning emancipation ?

4. Did we not see how they saved even the freemen from military service by using an artifice which changed them from landowners into " guests " and beneficiaries ?

5. When the widespread use of this means of exemption failed to suppress altogether the national army, and it was necessary to recognise the need of subjecting the beneficiary to military service, did we not see them step in between the king, the chief of the army, and their beneficiaries, and make it a fixed law that the beneficiaries should never follow the king except under them, with them, and at their command ?

6. Did we not see how they declared at the Assembly of Mersen, in 847, that they would not take part in campaigns except in the case of wars which they considered of national importance ?

With such precedents, it was not extraordinary that in the following century—the tenth century—a practice, which was the expression of the general tendency, and was looked upon on all sides as an established law, should lead to the absolute

refusal of the vassals to serve more than forty days, reckoned from the day of departure for the expedition.

And it should be observed that it was not only the great feudal lords, the king's chief vassals, who adopted that attitude, but all the vassals of every rank in relation to all suzerains. There was no vassal so small or so great who was bound to perform more than forty days' military service at his own expense. The necessity of defraying his expenses beyond that time, if, moreover, he consented to continue fighting, limited the sovereign's enterprises considerably, and all the more so because, if he was not paid day by day, the vassal might turn his horse's head homewards at a moment's notice: it was lawful for him to refuse his sovereign credit; there was nothing to oblige him to serve for the prospective profits of war, however certain they might be. In short, the sovereign was at the mercy of the goodwill of his vassals when the forty days had expired.

But warfare was not reduced only by the curtailment of the term of service. The expeditions were further reduced by other causes.

The vassal did not shut his eyes and march blindly after his suzerain against no matter whom. We are led to believe that he found numbers of plausible excuses for not fighting against the man in question, pleading his position, rights, and titles; for, in order to put an end to these refusals, a set form, which was then very rarely used, for the oath of fealty and homage, was subsequently introduced, and became more and more widely used: it is known as *liege homage* as opposed to *simple* or *plain homage*. By liege homage the vassal pledged himself to follow his sovereign in war "against every creature capable of life and death": *contra omnem creaturam quæ possit vivere et mori; contra omnes homines et feminas qui possunt vivere et mori*; "contre tous ceulx qui peuvent vivre et mourir." From formulas such as these it is easy to see that the suzerain spent no end of time and trouble in trying to put a stop to all the subterfuges of the vassal.

For instance, we find that military expeditions were further reduced by the discussion of the proposed war.

There was a third cause of reduction. The vassal himself often had vassals whom it was not his duty nor within his

rights to lead to support his suzerain in war, because the contract he had made with them was framed to that effect. The rear-vassals, when they were in that position, only followed the vassal in his own personal wars: that meant the deduction of so many men from the suzerain's army. Or else there were rear-vassals whom the vassal was not bound to send to the suzerain's service unless the suzerain paid their expenses from the first day and during the whole time of the expedition: that was another kind of obstacle to military enterprises. Finally, there were some rear-vassals who were not bound to fight even for the vassal except in the case of the defence of the fief; they could not be required to leave the fief. These are all instances of a new cause of the reduction of military enterprises: the diminution of the number of recruits.

In short, we have discovered three causes of the reduction of wars—in the tenth century from the decline of the Carlovingians, and in the eleventh, when feudalism was in full vigour. The three causes were: the abbreviation of the term of military service, the discussion of the proposed war and of the enemy's rights by those bound to fight, the diminution of the number of men bound to join the army.

The conclusion drawn is *that feudal armies were nothing more than a few squads of soldiers, and feudal wars were merely off-hand fights.* That was the real fact of the matter, except in the case of great dangers which affected the whole people, really national wars, when everyone came out from all sides, of his own accord, to fight the enemy. "The occasion of a war with Normandy was the only time when it was possible to raise a strong army," says Boutaric, professor at the École des Chartes. "In his private quarrels the king was supported by a *mere handful of men.*" [1]

With so restricted a number of combatants, it was obviously not necessary to keep military rolls; but, at the end of the period we are studying (the tenth and eleventh centuries), when the Capetians began to foresee the restoration of royal power, and made the first census of their military forces, the following interesting entries were made: "The Count of Champagne at the end of the twelfth century had at his command 2030 knights, and he sent only 12 knight-bannerets to the king.

[1] *Institutions militaires de la France,* pp. 113, 114.

The Duke of Brittany had 166 knights bound to serve in the army: he sent only 40 of them to the king. The king, *as Duke of Normandy* (Normandy was confiscated by Philip Augustus in 1204), had 581 knights bound to military service: his barons had more than 1500. And observe that the majority of knights, even those who were bound to serve in the army, could not be forced to leave the manor or the province as the case might be." [1] Is not the meaning of the fact we have stated clear enough? Are we not sufficiently convinced of the steady reduction of military service by triumphant feudalism? Philip Augustus, the first king to attempt to make a change in this state of things, by adopting measures which we shall mention presently, made the following list of the military contingents due to him from his vassals: "Bretagne, 40 knights; Anjou, 35; Flanders, 42; Boulonnais, 7; Ponthieu, 16; Saint-Pol, 8; Artois, 18; Vermandois, 24; Picardy, 30; Parisis and Orleans, 89; Touraine, 55." [2]

It happens that we have only to do with kings here, but that is because the documents concerning them had the privilege of being preserved, thanks to the glamour which royalty acquired in later years; but the other feudal lords can be judged by the Capetians. For it must be well understood that it was not merely in their quality of kings that the Capetians received such small contingents, but also in their quality of feudal landowners. The opposition to military service which we have observed was directed by all the vassals uniformly against all the suzerains.

The extremely restricted number of combatants that any suzerain of any rank could put upon the field, gives us some idea of that historical personage, frequently little understood, the *knight*. It is clear that under such conditions a knight, a single knight, was a man of importance: he formed, in his own person, a considerable part of the military force. What was known as the *ost*, the army, was estimated by the number of knights, just as nowadays it is estimated by the number of regiments. A few more knights on one side than on the other could make a serious inequality in the chances of war. Granted that, the personal valour, strength, and ability of the knight

[1] Boutaric, *Institutions militaires de la France*, pp. 191, 192.
[2] *Ibid.* p. 192.

were of great importance in action. The appearance on the field of battle of a knight who was strong enough to hold his own against three or four, was as good as a reinforcement which could decide a battle.

And since strength had to make up for number, since a handful of fighting men might be in the midst of a numerous hostile population, and since each of them was a unit of war whose loss was palpable, it was imperative that the knight should be stoutly protected by a suit of defensive armour, and that wherever he went he should take refuge within it, just as a small and efficient garrison can defend itself behind the walls of a small fortress, and can hold out against a superior force of the enemy.

We now understand the reason for the two indispensable accompaniments of the feudal military system: armour, literally a kind of portable fortress belonging to the knight; and the stronghold where he lived, a kind of stationary suit of armour. When a man was behind one or other of those defences, he was worth something; without them he would have been "soundly thrashed" on the field or in his own house by the first band of soldiers that happened to come up.

There is nothing to be surprised at, then, in the wonderful growth of fortresses, or rather fortified houses on feudal soil. The stronghold was a necessary part of the equipment of every soldier in this reduced military system; it is not in any way a proof of anarchy. Nor is there anything to wonder at in those double suits of chain armour, those heavy "coats and doublets of mail" which sometimes made it necessary for the knight who wore them to be lifted on to his "huge war-horse" by main force. He was indeed prepared for anything in his cuirass: in a land army he played the part performed nowadays by an iron-clad or a torpedo boat in a naval force.

The strength that a few renowned knights, or even a single one, contributed to an expedition, was no mere fairy-tale, whatever may be said to the contrary. Those famous warriors, Godfrey of Bouillon, Bohémond, Tancred, Richard Cœur-de-Lion, nicknamed the "Carpenter" because of the skill he showed in cutting the enemy to pieces with blows from his axe, are not mythological personages.

They are no more legendary than the knight-errant who swore an oath and was sanctioned by the benediction of the

Church to go forth and rescue the oppressed, and who in his own person constituted a public force.

Lastly, it is clear enough that if each knight, errant or otherwise, isolated or in a band, constituted in his own person a military force of that importance, he must, like each of our regiments and our pieces of artillery, have been "served"—that is to say, accompanied by a whole staff of non-combatants, who provided him with all the necessaries of life and rendered him assistance before and after a battle. Thus there were squires to carry part of the arms; and men on foot or on horseback to compose the knight's escort, to supply his wants and perform the services of an ambulance if he were wounded in battle.

We must now pass on to the second military organisation we mentioned at the beginning of the chapter: the organisation for the defence of the domain, and not for expeditions abroad. But the point we must bear in mind is that *military expeditions had been reduced in an extraordinary degree* when feudalism was at its height in France—that is, during the greater part of the tenth and eleventh centuries.

That such was the case is a further proof of the tendency towards the isolation of the estate and its independence.

We find things reversed when we leave military service abroad and come to the defence of the domain. Here we find that military service is increasing and augmenting. It is here a question of the domain, so we must pay great attention to it.

We have already mentioned the fortress, which bore the same relation to the defence of the domain as the armour did to the military expedition. The castle served not for the defence of the knight alone, but for that of the whole domain and its staff. It was composed of, or rather, surrounded by, enormous palisades or great walled enclosures behind which, when the first signal of alarm was given, the people on the estate took refuge, bringing with them everything from their homes which they could carry or convey. The castle was usually situated in such a way as to protect as large an area of the domain as possible.

We also noticed before that the vassals mustered in far larger numbers to defend the domain than to join in military expeditions, since they were all bound to defend the domain, whilst many of them were not obliged to join an expedition.

But the double security afforded by the fortress and by the armed assistance of all the vassals was not considered enough for the domain. A new and interesting phenomenon now appears, and continues to develop in the tenth and eleventh centuries, and reaches its consummation at the beginning of the twelfth—I mean the enrolment of tenant cultivators (*tenanciers roturiers*) for the defence of the domain.

This is a very complicated question, but I will try to deal with it briefly.

A tenant cultivator (*tenancier roturier*) was a man who was not a serf but a freeman, who could not be retained on the estate against his will, and who had had a piece of land granted him in consideration of some special service, usually manual service, or of the payment of rent—not, at all events, in return for military service; he was therefore distinguished both from the *serf*, because he was free, and from the vassal or *noble*, because he did not receive his tenure in return for military service. If he was sometimes called by the name of vassal he was improperly so called, and the mistake was probably due to the fact that he was in the position of a freeman. His classical name in the Middle Ages was "*homme de pooste, homo de potestate*, a man under authority," because he was under the authority, under the public control, of the lord, whilst he himself exercised no power of that kind in his tenure, unlike the suzerain and the vassal, who had powers over their own fiefs; but he was not the property of the lord, like the serf; he could not be said to be *de possessione* or *in possessionibus*. As for the name *roturier*, he acquired it by virtue of his profession, *ruptuarius*: though he was an absolutely free man, "he used to break up (*rompait*) the glebe," he worked his land himself (*rupture, roture*).

Now, where did this tenant cultivator come from?

We know that he must have been rare up to that time, since on the one hand, under the influence of the Franks, serfdom had been extended so as to include nearly the whole of the working class; while, on the other, in the feudal movement, freemen had generally been infeudated in consideration of military service. Hitherto, we have found that serfs and vassals represented the two subordinate ranks almost exclusively. Whence came this growth of tenant cultivators, who increased so rapidly in the tenth and eleventh centuries that at the beginning of

the twelfth they formed far the greater mass of the population ?

This wonderful growth came from one of the greatest and most pacific events in history : the *constant emancipation of individual serfs*. The tenant cultivators were emancipated serfs.

Historians have shown the most extraordinary stupidity in the way in which they have misconceived the tenth and eleventh centuries, the period in which this significant event, this revolution with its far-reaching results, was silently accomplished. " Serfdom had disappeared from our country by the eleventh century," says Leopold Delisle in his well-known essay on the *Condition de la classe agricole en Normandie au moyen âge*.[1] Therein lies the greatness of these so-called " iron " centuries ; in France they were the centuries during which the liberty of the individual was pacifically established for ever.

This gives us some idea of what was going on in those isolated domains whose history seems so dark and shadowy. What was going on there ? The domain was bringing about changes in everything all round. After having set free the great landowners, it gradually liberated all the men under them, the vassals and serfs. In the struggle against the old Romano-barbarian system of government, against the Merovingian *truste*, they had been compelled to give up a portion of their liberty for a time in so far as they were only granted land belonging to the " land of service "—that is, the estate which served the " land of mastership." But though the domain, that the vassal or serf possessed under the particularist system, was dependent on another domain, yet it led him straight towards independence. Did we not see just now how the vassal eased the bonds which his suzerain put upon him and gradually reduced his term of *military service* ? The movement went on even among the working class, and the serf gradually reduced the amount of *the agricultural or manual labour* he owed his suzerain : he obtained his freedom, and became a tenant cultivator instead of a serf.

In order to free himself gradually from military service, the vassal relied on his domain, on his fortress, on his complete levy of rear-vassals, which enabled him to brush aside the claims and dispute the commands of his suzerain. Even when he

[1] See Preface to *La Condition de la classe agricole en Normandie au moyen âge*.

actually refused to fulfil his feudal obligations, the means for turning him out of his estate were so limited that at the end of the eleventh century it was the universally accepted custom merely to make him pay a fine for that capital offence.[1] In the same way the serf, in order to free himself gradually from the obligation of agricultural labour—that is, from forced labour—relied on his domain, on that "settlement," that "home," that *servile mansus* where he was his own master, where he worked for his own profit; there he grew rich by improving his methods of agriculture by the lessons he learned from the great landowner for whom he did forced work, till he reached the position of being able *to pay* his lord for the land which he held instead of doing work for him. In this way he became a tenant cultivator, *homme de pooste*—that is to say, he paid rent instead of being a serf *bound to do forced labour*.

In this way the vassal with his moderate-sized domain and the serf with his small domain were first protected by the great domain of the suzerain, and then, when they had helped him to his freedom, themselves became liberated from him by imperceptible degrees.

And three-quarters of this change took place during the tenth and eleventh centuries.

Now, it was easy to find a place in the system of military service for this tenant cultivator without raising him to noble rank and though he paid otherwise for his tenure.

How is it that, while the vassal withdrew from military service as far as possible, the tenant cultivator, on the contrary, entered it? There is nothing contradictory in that. The vassal reduced his military service only in the case of expeditions outside the fief, and the tenant cultivator came to his assistance in the defence of the domain, not in other battles. The same idea always predominated: everything was concentred upon the estate. No history has ever been more focussed upon one point than that of the particularist form of society. "At the end of the eleventh century," says Boutaric, "public law allowed each lord to claim the help of his tenant cultivators. They might not be summoned *except for the defence of the fief*. All the lawyers of the Middle Ages are unanimous on this point."[2]

[1] Boutaric, p. 137.

[2] *Ibid.* p. 144.

The first evidence we have that the people were summoned to take up arms for the defence of the estate appears in the history of two famous institutions of the tenth and eleventh centuries : the *Peace of God*, and the *Truce of God*.

The Peace of God forbade any attack to be made upon persons or things consecrated to religious worship ; upon weak persons, women, old men, children ; upon defenceless peasants. It forbade anyone to carry off domestic animals, mares, foals of less than six months ; to burn the houses of peasants. The man who did not restore what he had taken or repair the damage he had done within a fortnight was condemned to pay twice their value.

The Truce of God ordered the suspension of hostilities against anyone or anything at certain times of the year, and on certain days of the week—as, for instance, from the first Sunday in Advent to the week after Epiphany, from the first day of Lent to the week after Whitsuntide, and throughout the year from Wednesday evening till Monday morning.

Such were its stipulations, subject to changes.

The Peace of God was declared at the local councils of Charroux in 989 ; of Limoges in 994 ; of Poitiers in the year 1000. " The princes and lords swore to observe all the clauses of the Peace of God ; King Robert established it throughout his states and even in Burgundy and at Lyons. In 1033 almost the whole of France had accepted the Peace of God." [1]

As for the Truce of God, it seems to have had its birth at Elne, in Roussillon, in 1027. Subsequently it was declared at the Council of Tuluges in 1041. " It first appeared in the south, and before the end of the eleventh century was established in the north of France and in England." [2]

The tenant cultivators, the serfs who were already freed, or those even who were only on the way to freedom, took up the defence of the domain for the purpose of maintaining the Peace and the Truce of God against those who tried to violate them.

The clergy, who had taken such an active and splendid part in the promotion of the Peace and the Truce by means of assemblies—wrongly called synods, however, for all the influential laymen were present at them—the clergy, I repeat, took

[1] Boutaric, pp. 167, 168. [2] *Ibid.* p. 169.

a no less important part in the maintenance of the two institutions by force of arms. They marched at the head of the peasants to sustain and direct their courage. Though unarmed, they went in the face of danger, stirring the armed people to follow them. A story that belongs to a slightly later date (1111), but which is only a late repetition of what occurred at that time, will give an idea of the noble activity of the clergy. "The Castle of Puiset was very strong. Several assaults upon it had been repulsed . . . and not one of the assailants dared attempt to scale the wall. One of the priests who had come with his parishioners devoted himself to the attempt. His name is unknown. Those present only noticed that he was bald, bare-headed, and unarmed. Protecting himself with a plank, which served as a shield, he clambered up the wall to the assault. On reaching the palisade he lowered himself beneath the loopholes, and thus shielded from blows, worked away to loosen a stake. He signed to the soldiers, who hastened up with hatchets and picks. The palisade gave way; they made their way into the castle." [1]

The Peace and the Truce of God, which were magnificent and original institutions and very much to the credit of the tenth and eleventh centuries, have nevertheless been turned to their discredit: people have insisted on regarding them as a proof that the lords of the manors spent their time in plundering and massacring their tenants, and that it became imperative to check and control them.

That is absolutely absurd.

1. In the first place, it would have been madness in a lord to amuse himself by devastating his own domain: besides, he used not to make war upon his own men.

2. It was the lords themselves, in conjunction with the clergy, who combined to promote the establishment of the two institutions at those meetings which have been wrongly called synods.

3. The fine incurred for violating these institutions was paid to the bishop or count—that is to say, to a lord of the manor; thus it is not a case of the strong oppressing the weak, but of the strong protecting the weak and representing their interests.

But to clear up all doubts, I will mention the kind of

[1] Boutaric, pp. 200, 201.

wars against which the Peace and Truce of God were directed. The south of France had scarcely been affected by feudalism as we saw. The military service of the nobility, regular military service—chivalry, in short—had not been organised there as a common obligation. The question of defence had yet to be solved. Furthermore, that part of the country had been but little inhabited by particularists, and was still in the state of disorder and decay in which the Romans and barbarians had left it. Many of the common people lived wandering lives, and readily formed bands of pillagers. The upper classes were not of much worth, and often took to the same evil kind of life. It was this state of things in the south which gave birth to the two institutions of which we are speaking. And they were imitated in the north *by the lords of the manor*.

Observe, too, that feudal independence, like all forms of independence, made it necessary for each lord to enforce justice by the means which were at his own disposal. The lords had no other means of guaranteeing their estates except personal force.

Thence arose the necessity of employing arms in many cases. As they had to deal with their neighbours, who were their equals and were in similar circumstances, and were not unarmed, violence was inevitable ; and in the struggle between neighbour and neighbour the country had to suffer, or, at any rate, had cause for fear. The Peace and the Truce of God were two institutions for protecting the people's rights, and it was imperative that they should be observed by both parties in a case where arms were used to enforce claims. To enforce their observance, the people were sanctioned by law to fall with all the strength they could muster upon whichever of the disputants infringed the people's rights as formulated in those institutions.

Some of the lords, of course, were eccentric persons, who made war for the sake of plunder. But it must be clearly understood that they did not plunder their own domains and their own men, but their neighbours'. But men of that type were far from being numerous. By preference they attacked the property of the Church, because it was less well defended. We now know how the Church organised her lawful defence.

It is highly characteristic of the good social conditions then

existing in the domains that the Church gained a perfectly regulated and organised influence over the people inhabiting the countries where the particularist form of society flourished, which led to many results of unquestionable importance, both moral and intellectual. In other countries the Church was undergoing terrible convulsions, as indeed was everything else, especially in Italy, at Rome. In France, and throughout the region where particularist influences had spread, the action of the Church was regularly felt, and met with steady and powerful support.

But if we need still further proofs to convince ourselves of the value of the tenth and eleventh centuries, we have only to look at the wonderful increase of prosperity which was their outcome.

We have already remarked the emancipation of the serfs, the powerful influence of religion; to these must be added the national language and Romanesque architecture.

Above all, we must not omit to mention the harmony that existed between the classes. "Except for a few isolated facts," says Leopold Delisle, "we have searched in vain for traces of that antagonism which, according to modern writers, prevailed between the classes of the society of the Middle Ages. The peasants early regained their liberty. Charters and customs clearly defined what each man owed to the other, either in payment or in personal service. The peasant performed his duties without repugnance; he knew that they were the price of the land which provided his family with sustenance; he knew also that he could count upon the aid and protection of his lord." [1]

The result of this social harmony was the triumphant expansion of the race, which took place at the end of the eleventh century.

As early as the tenth century, when three formidable invasions had threatened to overwhelm the country which had been conquered by the particularist family, they had been victoriously held in check and repulsed: they were the Norman invasion in the north, the invasion of the Saracens in the south, and that of the Hungarians in the east, who came as far as Lorraine. The particularist race did not lose an inch of land.

[1] *Condition de la classe agricole en Normandie au moyen âge*, Préface.

Is that a proof of anarchy, of decadence, of social disorder, of disorganisation, of want of understanding between the classes, of discouragement, of general confusion, of miserable helplessness, characteristics which it has been considered the right thing to apply to the tenth century? It must be mentioned it is commonly acknowledged that "feudalism saved Europe at that time," a confession to which even the detractors of that period are forced by the plainness of the facts, in spite of the contradiction it implies.

The end of the eleventh century gave rise to a real epic, which, even after the lapse of eight centuries, still fires our imagination. It radiates from France, its point of departure: let us follow it. In the north, England was conquered by the Normans, those later arrivals from Scandinavia, who became incorporated with their elders and predecessors, the Franks, and developed the most regular type of feudalism (1066). In the south, Portugal was wrested from the hands of the Saracens by a French prince, Henry of Burgundy, the great-grandson of Robert the Pious, King of France, and son of Hugh Capet (1094). Southern Italy, and Sicily too, were conquered by small Norman lords (1090). In the east, Hungary adopted the feudal system after its conversion to Christianity; the March of Brandenburg, the birthplace of the Prussian monarchy, was won from the Slavs by the Saxons and Franks of the Saxon plain. At all these points the limits of Charlemagne's empire were overstepped. But the boldest and, I must add, the rashest enterprise in which the generation sprung from the eleventh century showed its true colours, was that crusade, the most famous of all, which was headed by Godfrey of Bouillon, Bohémond, Tancred, and their comrades. When we think that these petty lords conceived and realised the idea of going right across Continental Europe and Asia Minor to conquer land, we get an idea of what they must have been on their own estates, and of what their men were, of the exuberant vitality which had been fostered there. The other crusades were much less audacious, because, in the first place, the road was already known to them, and because, subsequently, they travelled a great part of the way by sea.

These expeditions, which are quite worthy of epics, were all voluntary enterprises: that must not be forgotten. Feudal

service had no rights in the matter. All those who took part in the expeditions in the north or the east, in the conquest of England or the taking of Jerusalem, were enrolled entirely of their own free will. Their expenses were paid either out of their own pockets or by funds collected by way of largesse, such as alms given by Christians for the crusades.

That explains how it was possible for these expeditions to go on simultaneously with the military system, such as we have seen it, concentred on the domain. The obligations of feudalism, the ordinary organisation, went for nothing in these huge movements: they were simply the spontaneous result of the free and natural expansion of the race.

Moreover, it must be well understood that this powerful radiation was brought about by three things, which are quite in accordance with our description of the social system. The first was the extraordinary personal valour of the knights, who were as good as an army in themselves: we have proofs of this in the almost incredible exploits of the sons of the petty Norman lord, Tancred of Hauteville, and of their comrades in Italy and Sicily: the same thing was manifested in most of the deeds of prowess accomplished in the crusade. The second was the desire of the individual to create an estate for himself, or to risk his person for the sake of things in which he was interested, apart from personal considerations: we have proof of this in the conquest of England or in the popular movement of the crusades. The third was the widespread reputation of the feudal system and the desire of imitation which it stirred up: the proof of this lies in the way in which Hungary adopted an organisation similar to that of Frankish Europe.

I must add, by way of termination, that the expansion did not show its less satisfactory and, I was going to say, more militant side, till the end of the eleventh century. The reason was that a new element was then introduced which modified the feudal system: we shall come to it later, in due time.

CHAPTER XIII

THE INTRODUCTION OF THE SAXONS INTO GREAT BRITAIN BY THE JUTES

BEFORE passing to the causes of the decay of the feudal system, we must study the formation of another type, which, like that of the Frank, was the result of a Saxon emigration headed by Odinid chiefs. I mean the type of the Saxon of Great Britain called hereafter the *Anglo-Saxon*.

The Saxon of Great Britain differed from the Saxon of the Continent in so far as he happened to find *rich soil*, as did the Frank. And he differed from the Frank in so far as he *cleared the land* of inhabitants, just as the Saxon of the Continent had done in the plain of the Weser, which had been occupied by the Cherusci.

The fertile part of England proper, the splendid plains of her great rivers, produced the rich soil where the Anglo-Saxon type was formed. The Saxon invasion, in the first instance, stopped abruptly at the foot of the three great mountain ranges of the west, from which the rivers flow down: the hills of Cornwall, the mountains of Wales and those of Cumberland. In the north it was checked by the mountain lands of Scotland, the mountain chain of the Cheviots and the district round the Grampians known as the Highlands.

The wonderful productive powers of the superb lower plains of England are well known: I need not insist on them further.

But though the country is naturally as fertile as many of the best parts of Gaul, the Romans did not colonise it in the same manner as they did Gaul. The reason was that the atmospheric conditions were different. Even the north of Gaul, the part specially called Belgic Gaul, beyond the Marne and the Seine, had been but slightly Romanised: we noticed that the Franks were not really surrounded by Roman institutions

till they reached the Seine. The climate is usually the determining factor in the diffusion of a people. As the Roman went farther north the climate became more unlike what he was used to than when he went eastwards in the basin of the Mediterranean, or to the right of the Danube across Central Europe, and from there into Asia Minor. For this reason Roman colonisation, which had spread so far to the east, stopped short in the north in spite of a long and powerful military occupation.[1]

The intention of the Romans, when they occupied Great Britain by military force, was not to spread over the land, nor grow rich there, nor get the best from it they could by making settlements in the country and town centres. After discussing what the Romans would gain by conquering the country, Cicero came to the conclusion that nothing but slaves were to be got from it. Cæsar had no other object in view when he crossed the Channel with his legions than to deprive the Gauls of the support which the neighbouring people afforded them: "Though the summer," he says, "was nearly over, and the winter is early in these parts where Gaul slopes almost entirely towards the north, Cæsar undertook an expedition to Great Britain, because he knew that in almost all our wars against the Gauls help had come to them from that quarter."[2]

The atmospheric conditions of the northern countries were antipathetic and repellent to the people of the Mediterranean. That goes without saying, and is true at the present day. Those people cannot bear to part from their blue sky. That explains why the Romans did not let themselves be captivated by the fertility of those misty lands: "I shall proceed to describe, on the evidence of facts, matters, which being then but inaccurately known, my predecessors embellished with their eloquence," says Tacitus. "*The climate of Britain is repulsive because of its rain and continual mists.* Severe cold is unknown. Except for the olive, the vine, and the other kinds of vegetation that are natives of warm countries, the soil is favourable to every kind of produce; it is fertile."[3] It would not be out of place here to quote the feeling words which escaped from that same Roman at the beginning of his description of Germany,

[1] See a map of the Roman Empire: *Atlas*, Vidal-Lablache, 16.

[2] *De Bello Gallico*, bk. iv. 20.

[3] *Life of Agricola*, 10, 12.

in spite of the intense interest with which those northern lands inspired him: "Even supposing no dangers were to be anticipated from a rough and unknown sea, *who would ever leave Asia, Africa, or Italy to go and live in that wild land of Germany, with its inclement skies, its sombre aspect and unattractive customs, if it were not his fatherland?*" [1]

But whatever may have been their dislike of the lands of the north, once the Romans had set foot in Great Britain they could not put a limit to their conquest. They found themselves at war with peoples who had scarcely settled down at all to a sedentary life and fought like nomads, dispersing far and wide when defeated, then reappearing, enforced with fresh bands, and hurling themselves down upon the enemy like mountain torrents. It was impossible to establish a fixed and stable frontier against such restless people. The conquerors were obliged to penetrate into the heart of the country to reach these reserves of men, and had to set up two great walls right across the land in order to check their ceaseless incursions: there was Adrian's Wall between the Solway Firth and the mouth of the Tyne, and the wall built by Septimus Severus from the mouth of the Clyde to the Firth of Forth. But even that was not enough to fix these restless beings to the land; they were always in readiness to attack the Romans or to fall upon each other. For four and a half centuries the imperial domination was entirely absorbed in keeping them in check.

From Cæsar's first landing in 55 B.C. till the final retreat of the legions when they were recalled by Honorius in 408 to check the great barbarian invasion on the Continent, the Roman occupation showed itself only in the following ways:

1. By the creation of *Roman roads* to facilitate the passage of the legions. The most famous of these roads is that which crossed England obliquely from Dover to Chester. It thus led from the south to the north at the same time as from the east to the west. It followed the general direction of the hills, which form, as it were, the backbone of the country and command the whole land.

2. By the construction of *intrenched camps*. They are the origin of many names of places which end in *cester* or *chester*, the ancient Saxon form of the Latin word *castrum*, camp. The

[1] *Germania*, ii.

town of Chester, for instance, now celebrated for its cheeses, owes its name to the camp which guarded the western extremity of the Roman road I have just mentioned.

3. By the establishment of *centres for agents of commercial companies*. Roman merchants used to set up depôts, under shelter of the camps, where they collected slaves for sale and traded in furs from the north, which the native hunters procured for them.

4. By the formation of *colonies of officials*. The multitude of posts in the imperial government were the great attraction to Roman immigrants in Great Britain, where, as we have just said, colonisation had but few natural attractions for men of southern races. The officials, at any rate, found ample scope for pillaging, as elsewhere. It is probable, however, that even they were not very desirous of settling in Britain. Their colonies were not permanent. They must have longed for more sunny provinces, for larger profits among less primitive tribes.

5. By the foundation of *public buildings*. These were built by the emperors to fulfil certain intellectual and material needs of the official staff and of the few Romans who cared to live there as colonists.

Thus there was no such invasion of private men, no such Latin colonisation, no such fusion of natives with conquering peoples as took place in Gaul. No race of "Britanno-Romans" was formed like that of the Gallo-Romans. The reason is that the Roman occupation of Great Britain was purely military and official, and no farming colonists settled in the land.

So when, after 453 years of this kind of domination, the empire collected its forces for a last stand against the barbarians, and recalled its legions from Great Britain, there was a wholesale departure of Romans from the country. It would almost be possible to state the day and hour when it took place, as if it were the raising of a siege. There was no defeat of the imperial forces, as there might have been had the invaders broken through the frontier, as they did on the Continent, but there was an exodus of the Roman population. And, on its departure, the population, which consisted chiefly of soldiers and officials, left behind it scarcely a mark of its activity of four hundred years. So few traces of its work did it leave behind that Montalembert wrote, "Imperial Rome left no

trace of her horrible rule in the institutions any more than in the monuments of Great Britain. The language and customs escaped her influence as well as the laws. All that is not Celtic is Teutonic in that island." [1]

All this explains how it was that the Odinid chiefs, who, as we shall see, introduced the Saxons into England after the departure of the Romans, did not find that organisation of Roman government or the Romanised population which constituted all the strength of the Merovingian rule in Gaul.

The opposition the Saxon invasion encountered in Great Britain was from the pure Celts. There had been an incessant influx of Celts from Gaul. They pushed each other towards the north in proportion as there were fresh arrivals in the south. At the time of the Roman occupation and up to the arrival of the Saxons there were three distinct layers of Celts, as it were, superposed, which had evidently come there at three different periods.

In the extreme north—that is to say, in Scotland—were those who had been the first to land and had been driven up there. They had retained the nomadic habits and other peculiarities of the primitive Celts. The country, which is still famous for hunting, was of such a nature as to hasten their decay. They had all the habits of a hunting population; they were wild in appearance and tattooed themselves. The tribe of *Picts* inhabited the eastern slope of Scotland, while the Celts on the west were called *Caledonians*. But on the western side they were disturbed by other Celts, who had crossed in the first place from the south and the centre of England to Ireland, had travelled to the north, crossed to Scotland by sea, and taken possession of the lands round the Firth of Clyde. These people were known as the Scots. They eventually gave their name to Scotland.

From the north of England proper to the northern edge of the basin of the Thames was a second layer of Celts, who formed the intermediate type of the population of Great Britain. They were called *Britons*. They were more civilised than the Picts and Caledonians, did not haunt the woods so much or wander from place to place, though they were still very restless:

[1] *Les Moines d'Occident* bk. x. chap. i. vol. ii. p. 11.

their main occupation was the care of flocks and herds, to which the country was admirably suited. There are three kinds of soil in England which are constantly found side by side. At the bottom of the valleys are luxuriant meadows; they afforded pasture for all kinds of cattle and a sheltered retreat from the cold in winter for all living things. On the slopes of the hills were magnificent forests, mainly of oaks; they harboured innumerable herds of swine. Finally, on the tops of the hills, on the open pastures, which were sufficiently watered by the humidity of the climate, grazed flocks of sheep. I need not say that in such a spot it was easy for the Celts to continue to lead the wandering life of shepherds.

A third layer of Celts, which have been confused with the preceding because they bore the same name of Britons, but who were really distinct, occupied the land between the northern rim of the basin of the Thames and the Channel. They were Belgæ, belonging to the same tribe as those of the north of Gaul, and they sometimes bore the same name. For instance, there were Atrebates there as well as in Artois. The third group of Celts were the most like the Celts of Gaul in every way. They had been the last to emigrate to Great Britain; they traded with those who remained on the other side of the Channel; like them, too, they devoted themselves to agriculture and the industrial arts more than the other Britons. They too came the most into contact with the Romans. But since the Romans failed to surround them with active agricultural colonists, they continued to live a wandering life and to have a nomadic form of organisation, while at the same time they practised a primitive kind of agriculture and employed a system of clan government. For the system of clan government, under the guise of an authority based on the family and tribal headship, or of a local and subordinate power, was carried on behind the Roman administration and was the machinery which organised the frequent risings of the people.

Such, then, roughly speaking, was the population which the Saxons found in possession of Great Britain at the time of their landing. The Celts were certainly but little attached to the soil, and so it can be easily understood how they withdrew of their own accord from the places where the Saxon peasants

built their dwellings. We now propose to follow the phases of their history.

Since the restless disposition of the Celts of Great Britain was originally the result of their pastoral profession, and as it did not specially spring from a hatred of foreigners, it did not disappear after the departure of the Romans. No sooner were they rid of the oppressive peace which the imperial domination had forced upon them than the island tribes gave themselves up freely to their favourite pursuit of making incursions upon one another. The lead was chiefly taken by the most nomadic of the tribes, the Caledonians, the Picts and Scots, who came down from the north and swept over England. The Belgæ, who lived between the Thames and the Channel, suffered the most heavily from this kind of warfare, as they were the most sedentary of the tribes. The different tribal groups of this southern region united themselves when menaced by this common danger, and chose as penteyrn or pendragon—that is to say, as their common leader—Vortigern, who belonged to a tribe which occupied the district about London.

The advantages of London as a place for concentration have been manifest from that time. Owing to the position it holds in the splendid basin of the Thames, it formed even in those days a wonderfully convenient market both for home and foreign trade. Its first start was modest, to be sure, but its superiority over the other centres in England was not slow in declaring itself.

The foreign merchants, who quite naturally took the place of the Roman traders, were those from the shores nearest Great Britain and outside the territory of the empire—that is to say, the *Jutes*.

The Jutes were merely Goths from the Scandinavian peninsula, which was known as the Cimbrian Chersonessus from the name of the famous Cimbrians who descended from there upon Rome, and Jutland from the name of the Gothic population. The soil of a large portion of Jutland was much inferior to that of the Scandinavian islands and of Scania (the south of Sweden), the principal home of the Goths, and so its inhabitants were more ready to abandon agriculture and take to maritime trade and piracy. Great Britain offered them a fair field for this kind of enterprise, since the Romans had entirely abandoned it.

Its inhabitants were within easy reach, and were a simple, still primitive people, who were excellent customers for merchants and an easy prey for pirates.

But piracy and trade cannot be carried on with a primitive country without the support of military forces, so the Odinid warriors became the great leaders of these maritime expeditions. They built large vessels, well equipped and well armed, which served to protect the transports of the Jutes.

At the time when Vortigern was elected penteyrn, the brothers Hengist and Horsa, whom posterity has placed among Odin's direct descendants, were at the head of those Jutes who were carrying on trade with London. Vortigern applied to them to bring him help from abroad, to enrol in his service some one of those northern bands which had won such renown by their conquest of the Roman Empire. This took place a little before 450. On that occasion the Britons did just what the Corsicans, for instance, a somewhat similar social type, so often did when their intestine quarrels drove them to appeal to the generosity of the merchants of Genoa and Pisa, who got them soldiers, as well as every other kind of merchandise. Hengist and Horsa came to an agreement with Vortigern. It was an undertaking very much to the liking of the Odinids. They enrolled all the Jutes they could find who were seeking their fortunes, and also obtained reinforcements among their neighbours the Saxons, who were in search of lands.

It was in this way that the Saxons were shown the road to England.

The manner in which the Odinids went about the north of Europe recruiting bands of warriors to pillage or conquer states, and led the Saxons in search of new domains, is evinced by nothing so clearly as the above circumstance. At that very time the Saxon emigrations, which were grouped under the characteristic name of "Frank" or "free" bands, and had already filled the valleys of the Rhine and the Main, finally reached Celtic Gaul with Merovig.

The first Saxon expedition into Great Britain was really a joint expedition of Jutes and Saxons. But the Jutes predominated. The whole affair, however, was on a very small scale.

They landed at the Isle of Thanet. It is the extreme point

of the country which the Celts called the "projection," the promontory—*Kent*, in their own tongue. It was called an island because it was enclosed between the sea and the two mouths of the river Stour. The expedition travelled up the Stour as far as Canterbury. There it found the Roman road of which we have spoken, and joined Vortigern at London. The combined force advanced by the same Roman road as far as Leicester (that is to say, the camp, *castrum*, of the river Leire, the ancient name of the river Soar).

At that point the valley of the Thames ends and the great basin of the Humber begins. It stretches as far as Scotland, and was the region upon which the northern Celts directed most of their attacks. An encounter at that place was inevitable.

But on the east of Leicester is a region of immense marshes, formed by all the rivers which flow into the Wash. The expedition bore to that side in order to have the marshes at its rear and avoid being surrounded by the northern Celts, who were far superior in numbers. It encamped near Stamford, on the Welland, a tributary of the Wash.

It sustained the attack of the enemy victoriously, dashed in pursuit of the assailants—who took flight after the failure of their attack, as was the habit of the Celts—and routed them completely. Horsa perished gloriously in the battle.

Hengist and his skilled navigators, like the good merchants and pirates that they were, demanded in return for their services the Isle of Thanet—where they had landed—and the Isle of Wight. Those are the two places which, with their natural defences—for they are both surrounded by water—command the finest places for landing in England. The Isle of Thanet, on the one hand, commands the mouth of the Thames and London; and on the other, commands the seacoast of Kent, "where," as Cæsar had already remarked, "almost all the vessels coming from Gaul used to land their goods." [1] The Isle of Wight commands the ports of Southampton and Portsmouth, which are more famous than ever at the present day, the one for commerce, the other as a military station.

But however well satisfied Hengist and his skilled navigators were with their two cleverly chosen maritime posts, some of their followers were not contented. The Jutes, who had been

[1] *De Bello Gallico*, bk. v. 13.

enlisted for the expedition, and the Saxons wanted something different, a piece of dry land, a country to live in. Consequently a quarrel soon arose between the followers of Hengist and the Britons under Vortigern about the fair lands of the country of Kent, which lay opposite the Isle of Thanet, and which the new-comers wished to occupy. A fight took place at Aylesford, on the Medway, a tributary of the Thames, which forms a kind of broad dyke across Kent. Hengist, who took his stand in the part of Kent between the Isle of Thanet and the Medway, got the upper hand. In this way *the kingdom of the Jutes was founded in Kent.*

The Jutes had certainly brought Saxons with them, but they were not true Saxons: they did not belong to the particularist form of society; their ancestors had not undergone any transformation on the shores of Norway. They belonged, as I said before, to the Old Germans and to the Gothic branch of the Old Germans: they were Goths from the Danish peninsula, a country less rich by nature than the islands because its western and northern regions are largely formed by sands and lagoons. Many points in the history of their invasion of England can be explained when once we have grasped what determined their form of society:

1. Historians appear to have always distinguished them from the Saxons, even from those who took part in the expedition. They have taken care to point out that the band of Hengist and Horsa was composed of two elements—the Jutes and the Saxons; while, on the contrary, when the Saxons came alone, later on, in several different expeditions, and founded kingdoms which were not merely distinct but even hostile to each other, historians have confounded them under the same name of Saxons. The disparity of the social types on the one hand, and their similarity on the other, explain the use of these names.

2. It is obvious that before the expedition the Jutes had frequented England without appropriating any land there. They entertained friendly commercial relations with London, with Vortigern's people, who asked for their assistance. The Isle of Thanet, even, did not belong to them, since they caused it to be ceded to them after their successful intervention against the northern Britons. The situation decidedly points to their being navigators living by commerce and adventure rather

than agricultural farmers, who were merely in search of land.

3. The firm "Hengist & Horsa Brothers" marks patriarchal organisation. It might be said that that concerns only the Odinids, the chiefs of the expedition, and not the Jutes. But there is another point which is undoubtedly characteristic of the Jutes. It is this: in the kingdom of Kent, where the band of Jutes settled, the *Jarls* were distinguished from the *Karls*—that is to say, the nobles from the peasants—just as was the case with the Goths. The form of the words was slightly different: they were written eorls and ceorls, from which came earl and churl, but the meaning is the same. The distinction between nobles and peasants is not found among the Saxons, who seem to have been pure democrats. Further, there were many personages among the Jutes of England in whose names the word *ethel*, signifying noble, occurred—as, for example, Ethelbert, Ethelburge, Ethelred, Ethelbrith. No such usage is found among the Saxons of that period.

4. The new inhabitants of Kent are represented in history as a gentle, refined people with lofty aspirations and high ideals. The sympathetic manner in which they welcomed the mission of St. Augustine of Canterbury, and the qualities of true greatness they displayed on that occasion, will always live in history. We seem to perceive in them a mind open to intellectual ideas, to foreign influences. The Saxons, on the contrary, for a long time had the reputation of being regular peasants, entirely absorbed in their personal affairs. Here again we touch upon the difference between the commercial and the agricultural types.

The Jutes and Saxons, then, were utterly distinct.

The peculiarly commercial character of the Jutes explains a phenomenon which historians have omitted to elucidate; it explains why the Jutes did not continue to invade and people Great Britain. Even in the single expedition they made, they were obliged, as we saw, to get recruits from the Saxons. The fact is that Great Britain, as we have described it, offered, after all, only a modest field for exploitation, and somewhat limited resources. The country was not such as to attract many merchants. The Romans on their part had already verified that fact, which Cicero had predicted, and, naturally, it would have been much less favourable for trade after the custom

provided by the Roman military and administrative colonies had been withdrawn. Agricultural immigrants, on the contrary, who were in search of land, like the Saxons, found a superabundance of just what they wanted in a country with rich soil, with virgin soil, where it was very easy to displace the unstable population. For that reason Hengist and Horsa, like shrewd men of business, had made offers to the Saxons.

The two leaders of the Jutes had not been obliged to apply to the Saxons because the population of Jutland was insufficient; for the first expedition did not number very many persons, and we shall see later that Jutland flooded Great Britain with pirates when that country had been enriched by the agriculture of the Saxons, just as later on it flooded Neustria when that country had been enriched by the agriculture of the Franks: it then became a rich field for plunderers. I am here alluding to the Danish invasions which started from Ribe, on the western coast of Denmark. But at the time of Hengist and Horsa Great Britain was not in a condition to attract the Jutes in great numbers; they were content for their part to have got possession of the two positions that were the most important from the point of view of navigation and commerce, the coast of Kent and the Isle of Wight. In the same way European peoples at the present day are content to get into their possession the places favourable to maritime commerce in the new countries that they cannot or do not wish to people.

However, the Jutes could not help perceiving how nearly their situation was menaced by the innumerable Celtic population, whom, after all, they were trying to use for their own advantage, and who were a very impressionable people and much given to fighting. A single headlong charge of the Celts might one day have swept away and cast to the winds the small dwellings of the Jutes, although they had chosen their sites with great cleverness, so that they were easily defendable by a small number of men and could be easily reprovisioned and succoured by sea.

History has preserved some vestiges of the vicissitudes which the colony in Kent had to undergo. It is known that eight years after the victory of Aylesford, which won for them land stretching as far as the Medway, the Jutes were forced a second time to take refuge in the Isle of Thanet, where they

withstood the impetuous attack of the natives victoriously. The latter were led by twelve chiefs, all illustrious men, who all killed themselves after the battle. A truly Celtic story!

It is also known that the Jutes were unable to maintain their hold of the Isle of Wight, which was, to be sure, less important than Kent and the Isle of Thanet from the commercial point of view; for we shall see that the Saxons conquered it in their turn, and had to drive out the Britons.

On the other hand, the Jutes, who avenged themselves from time to time, used to make sudden and terrible raids, sweeping rapidly across all the south of Great Britain between the Thames and the Channel. The lamentations of a contemporary British writer, Gildas, are evidence of these raids, as are the names of places which, even in Cornwall, have retained the memory of Hengist; for example, Hengestesdun, originally Hengestes-dune —that is to say, Hengist's mountain. But, when they had done plundering, the Jutes did not stay in the country; they returned with their booty to the shores of Kent.[1]

We gather from this picture of the way of life to which the Jutes had been thus reduced, that they must have been well aware what an advantage it would be to them if the Saxon cultivators, who were eminently capable of getting a firm footing on the land and of keeping it, and would guarantee them against the incorrigible incursions of their uncomfortably near neighbours the Britons, would establish themselves near their own settlement in Kent.

The Saxons did not wait to be asked twice, and flowed into the country without delay. The history of England really begins with them.

[1] Arthur de la Borderie, *Les Bretons insulaires.*

CHAPTER XIV

THE PREDOMINANCE OF THE SAXONS OVER THE CELTS AND THE JUTES IN GREAT BRITAIN

I HAVE related how the Saxons, in company with the Jutes, and led by the Odinid chiefs Hengist and Horsa, were introduced into Great Britain, and how, after the first expedition, it had been to the interest of the Jutes, in view of the turbulence of the native population, to encourage pure Saxons to come over in larger numbers and colonise that rich-soiled country.

A band of pure Saxons arrived in 477, twenty-two years after the victory of Aylesford had secured the possession of Kent to Hengist's troop.

The difference in character between the new-comers and the Jutes is brought out very strongly by the difference in their choice of land.

The former chose a portion of the southern coast of England, which was unsuitable for maritime settlements. Although it lay just between Kent and the Isle of Wight, between the district round Dover, with its small neighbouring ports, and that round Portsmouth and Southampton, the Jutes had not troubled to take possession of it. If they had annexed it, they would have brought the two naval positions they had acquired into touch. But the coast along there is scarcely accessible for vessels. The two most important towns on that piece of coast, Brighton and Newhaven, illustrate that fact. Brighton has no harbour, and vessels have to discharge their freights at the end of long piers. Newhaven is only a very small port, which the daily arrival of steamers from Dieppe alone rouses to a momentary state of animation.

On the other hand, that district was admirably suitable for the reception of a colony of agriculturists at the time of the coming of the Saxons, for the following reasons:

The very inaccessibility of the coast was a security against pirates, while the sea afforded the colonists a possible means of escape in time of need. Moreover, the district is protected by a natural entrenchment. Hills rise up all along the coast. In the west they are some little distance from the shore, but they gradually approach it towards the east until they terminate in cliffs; thus they command the whole coast from Selsea Bill to Beachy Head, between Chichester and Pevensey. They are called the South Downs—that is to say, low hills ("dunes") or barren ranges situated in the south. They are, in fact, chalk hills, and only produce short grass. It is only in modern times that they have become well known as sheep pastures. But, like the walls of a fortress, they formerly constituted a line of defence against invaders, as is proved by the considerable remains of entrenchments which still crown their summits.

A plateau, or rather an elevated plain, extending into the interior as far as the valley of the Thames, lies well protected behind these guardian ramparts. On the side near the Thames it is bordered in the same way as on the south, by a line of hills, called the North Downs, parallel and similar to the South Downs. Its central line is the watershed of the rivers flowing into the Thames and the Channel. The principal rivers are the Arun and the Ouse, which flow into the Channel near Arundel and Newhaven respectively, and the Wey and the Mole, which join the Thames at its great bend between Windsor and London. To the west and the east the rivers flow into the ramifications of the sea opposite the Isle of Wight on the one hand, and on the other into the Medway and the small neighbouring rivers of Kent. In this way the elevated plain between the Channel, the Thames, the rivers of the inlets opposite the Isle of Wight, and the rivers of Kent, forms a clearly defined quadrilateral, a region absolutely distinct from the surrounding country. It is liberally watered, as we have just seen. Although it is surrounded by chalk hills, it is composed of fertile soil, clay, sand, limestone, and an extraordinary number of animal and vegetable fossils, which were deposited in this large area by some giant river of ancient geological ages. At the time of the Saxon invasion a splendid growth of forest was evidence of its fertility, and made it seem like an oasis. On that account the name of *Weald*—that is to say, "the forest," from an old

Saxon word identified with the German *wald*—had clung to it *par excellence*. At the end of the ninth century its wooded surface still measured not less than a hundred miles from west to east, by twenty-five miles from south to north.[1]

Those are the main features of the physical structure of this region. The emigrant Saxons must have seen that it could be converted into excellent arable land if it were cleared. Cut off and shut in as it was by inhospitable shores, by repellent cliffs, and covered with virgin forests, it could not serve as a market for merchants like the Jutes, but offered the true peasants of the Saxon plain a fertile piece of land, isolated and uninhabited, where they pictured themselves developing estates after their own heart.

Nothing is so significant in Social Science as the nature of the places where people settle. It at once reveals the essential characteristics of the constitution of a race. Just as animal and vegetable species, so do social species betray their natural aptitudes in their choice of the conditions under which they prefer to live. We have just seen this illustrated in the case of the Saxons and Jutes. If we had nothing to enlighten us on this head but the difference of the places in which they chose to settle in Great Britain, we could judge of the fundamental difference of their occupations and their main interests.

The Jutes kept the name of Kent for the territory they conquered. It was known to merchants and navigators before their time. The Saxons gave their own name to the land they had just acquired. They called it Southern Saxony, *Sussex*. By giving it the designation of southern, they signified their independence with regard to those Saxons who had taken part in the conquest of Kent. Moreover, it was not long before other bands began to arrive, and they all took names which indicated the relative positions of their settlements by the points of the compass: Sussex, Essex, Wessex, Middlesex—that is to say, Southern Saxony, Eastern Saxony, Western Saxony, and Middle Saxony. The elevated plain we have just described, and which the Saxon colony in question gradually filled from end to end, still bears the name of Sussex on the slope towards

[1] See Arthur de la Borderie, *Les Bretons insulaires*, p. 40; *Atlas*, Vidal-Lablache, p. 106; *Carte physique des Iles Britanniques*; Foncin's *Atlas Général*, p. 25; *Grande-Bretagne du VI^e^ au XII^e^ siècle.*

the Channel, and the analogous name of Surrey—that is to say, Kingdom of the South; *Suth Rice* in Saxon—on the slope towards the Thames.

The settlement of the Saxons in Sussex, in so far as the fundamental and essential features are concerned, presents the spectacle which was reproduced twelve hundred years afterwards in the first occupation of America by the same race. Agriculturists belonging to the particularist form of society came to the United States, just as they did to Sussex, in the track of merchants, in order to found free estates on a wooded coast in a country inhabited by restless, warring tribes accustomed to the system of clan government, who were driven out in spite of their natural bravery, or else withdrew of their own accord from an unconquerable dislike of a toilsome sedentary life. The new-comers were not slow in spreading across the immense continent as far as the foot of the great chains of mountains in the far west, making the natives recoil before them, just as the Saxons on the small British continent quickly drove back the Celts to the foot of the high mountains of the west. And though the new American population was composed of many different European nationalities, the particularist group won the lead in the end and gave its form to all the rest. Exactly the same thing happened in Great Britain, where other tribes came after the Saxons, as we shall see, but were unable to oust the Saxons with their peculiar form of society.

Thus the same race recommenced the same enterprise after a lapse of more than a thousand years. Only it was carried on in a far larger theatre, on a far larger scale, and with better equipments. For that reason events in America have assumed more formidable proportions and have progressed at a far higher speed. But in both cases the results have been the same in this sense, that they are of the same kind and attest the same social forces.

If we wish to understand the history of England, we must picture this little continent as "America in miniature," which Providence modelled on a small scale and placed near the Old World so that the Saxon race might use it as its first field of development, and find it proportioned to the feebleness of its first efforts.

Let us first examine the settlement of the first colony of pure Saxons in Sussex. We have described the territory already.

The expedition landed at Cymenesora (Selsey) on the coast opposite the Isle of Wight, " quite close to a hamlet now called Wittering," [1] in the south-west corner of the present county of Sussex. When rumours of their landing got abroad, the Britons of the neighbourhood straightway made an attack upon the Saxons. There were several British chiefs in the neighbourhood. But instead of combining their movements and giving each other mutual support, they came one after the other and hurled themselves in separate bands upon the Saxons, who, on the contrary, formed themselves into a serried phalanx, and found no difficulty in defeating their undisciplined bands. So all the Britons were conquered one after the other.[2] They were not merely repulsed, but suffered severely, and when they were attacked in their turn, they soon had no place of refuge left except the " Forest," the Weald, behind the South Downs.[3]

" There they reassembled like a swarm of bees : *congregati sunt igitur Britanni quasi apes*," says Henry of Huntingdon. One can almost imagine one hears their confused buzzing in the depths of the forest!

The Saxons beat the woods systematically, and the Britons, who probably emerged on the side near Kent, thought it as well to avoid receiving the attack of the enemy when they appeared in large numbers, and so shut themselves up in an ancient Roman citadel on the outskirts of the forest : it was the citadel of Anderida, *Anderidæ castrum* ; in Saxon, *Andredes ceaster* (Pevensey). The siege began. Famine ensued. When the Britons were half dead with starvation, the Saxons made an assault. The stronghold was taken by main force. All those within perished, and there remained not a Briton to tell the tale : " *interfecerunt omnes, qui id incolerent, adeo ut ne unus Brito ibi superstes fuerit.*" [4]

That is the way in which Sussex was cleared of its inhabitants. The Saxons rased Anderida to the ground. In the twelfth century, it seems, its ruins were still visible in a deserted spot ;

[1] Reclus, vol. iv. p. 472, map 103.
[2] Henry of Huntingdon, *Chronicon Saxonicum.*
[3] A. de la Borderie, p. 40.
[4] *Chronicon Saxonicum.*

but the precise situation of the place is now a problem which experts alone can solve.

The small colony in Sussex, which was firmly established in its safe retreat, was only an advance guard. It had drawn its most eager and adventurous recruits from the Saxon plain. But once the movement was set on foot, emigration went on at a great pace on a large scale; and the emigrants, instead of looking for a well-protected place like Sussex, went farther along the coast to the westwards, where the country opens out into broad expanses, stretching from the inlets opposite the Isle of Wight to the hills of Cornwall, and forms a larger plain between the Thames and the Channel, which gradually get farther apart. This region, which at the present day includes Hampshire, Berkshire, Wiltshire, Dorsetshire, and Somersetshire, was called *Wessex*—that is to say, Western Saxony.[1]

The second expedition of pure Saxons, which continued to be increased by fresh arrivals for more than thirty years, was headed by Cerdic, another Odinid leader. According to Saxon tradition, his genealogical tree was correctly drawn, and showed him to be a direct descendant of Odin in the ninth degree.

He landed in 495 opposite the Isle of Wight at Caldshot, or Caldshore—that is to say, Cerdic's shore. He was received by the Britons in exactly the same way as the Sussex colony had been received, and he succeeded in repelling them in a similar way. At first he occupied Hampshire, north of Southampton (which name means, town in the south of Hampshire). So his land lay between Sussex and the valley of the Avon, where Salisbury now stands. Some thirty years later the colony spread from there westwards as far as the lower basin of the Severn and the neck of Cornwall, and in the north as far as the most northerly bend in the Thames, where Oxford is situated. It was no small expansion.

There was a considerable difference in size between this large colony, which occupied one of the most remarkable regions of England, and the small colony in Sussex, or the little settlement in Kent. It is therefore easy to understand how it came about that Sussex became absorbed by Wessex. The change took place almost at once and without any disturbance. As

[1] Foncin's *Atlas Général*, 25.

for the kingdom of Kent, its destinies were limited, to judge by what we already know of the life of the Jutes, and about a hundred years after the death of Cerdic it too was joined to Wessex after suffering several changes of fortune (645; final union in 823). Moreover, before his death (534) Cerdic secured for his colony the free use of the sea by recapturing the Isle of Wight (530), probably from the Britons, who had apparently again taken up their abode there. According to Bede, he exterminated all the natives he found on the island.

The occupation of Great Britain by the Saxons really dates from the time of these decisive expansions of the race under the Odinid chief Cerdic, the contemporary, and, in more respects than one, the rival of Clovis. We shall find, in fact, that the whole social history of the English springs not from Hengist, nor the Jutes of Kent, nor from the Saxons of Sussex, but from those of Wessex.

The colony of Wessex, however, had no weak party to deal with. The prowess of the renowned King Arthur, the Celtic hero, and of his knights of the Round Table, was exerted against it. The grandeur of the attack made by the vigorous Saxons of Wessex must have increased the merit in men's minds of those who attempted resistance, though in vain. That is the source of the epic splendour of the legend of Arthur. Perhaps we do not take this sufficiently into account when we see with astonishment the proportions which the hero has assumed in the legends of the Britons; for though he may be a man of genius in his way, his genius is of a thoroughly Celtic type. Of course the loss of the large territory of Wessex must have been a far more serious and decisive disaster for the Britons than the loss of the extreme end of Kent or of the secluded plain of Sussex. It was the death-struggle for them, as the fall of Ilion was for the Trojans; that agony found expression in a national epic, which has all through a touch of the boastful intermingled with its pathetic strain, as is sometimes the case with descriptions of the heroism of inferior races, which are touching but at the same time tinged with vaingloriousness. Anyone who takes the trouble to read the songs of the old bards of that time, will find in them a poetical inspiration which might easily be adapted to the war of independence of any noble and valiant tribe of American Indians.

In spite of the prowess of Arthur and his knights, Wessex was swept clear of Britons. The way in which it was done was very simple. As soon as the Saxons were in need of land for cultivation they encroached on the enemy's territory. The Britons evacuated the land of their own accord—a method of warfare practised by nomads. They would then return prepared for the attack, and would fall upon the Saxons unexpectedly. The latter contented themselves by standing their ground and keeping the conquered territory. The Britons, overcome with surprise on seeing that the enemy whom they had been unable to drive back did not pursue them in their turn, considered the fight indecisive, or, more often, a victory to their own side. Much of Arthur's glory may be attributed to the belief of the bards in these illusive victories. And this idea still persists. For a Breton of the present day, a distinguished historian, M. Arthur de la Borderie, considers that Celtic arms won a victory every time that the Saxons halted at a new point in their onward march. But though success follows success, he has to admit that the land was evacuated by the Britons.

The conquered Britons not only took refuge in the Cornish hills and in the Welsh mountains beyond the Severn, but passed over in a body to the other side of the Channel, to Armorica, and the name of Brittany, which that part of Gaul still bears, is due to that famous exodus. Thus the whole territory of Wessex was evacuated by the Britons. Modern historians, who have been very much puzzled at not finding any trace of a Celtic population in the midst of the Saxons, have conceived the idea that the reason why the Celts disappeared from history was that they had joined with the conquerors in returning to a pagan worship, which must seem highly improbable to anyone who knows the social and religious condition of the Celts. But the same authors are obliged to confess that there are no traces of any such thing. A small knowledge of Social Science would have shown them that there is no need to supplement historical evidence.

Saxon territory in England was increased at the same time (530) by the formation of a fresh colony to the north of Kent, beyond the Thames. This additional colony, which was not of much importance and was absorbed by Wessex like the others,

gave the name of Essex—that is to say, Eastern Saxony—to the basins of some of the small rivers along the coast to the north of the Thames; and the name of Middlesex—that is to say, Middle Saxony—to a region now covered by London, which was also on the north of the Thames.

Now that we have a complete knowledge of the territory originally occupied by the Saxons in Great Britain, and of the way in which they got possession of it, we must examine the institutions which the conquerors founded on those rich and empty lands. They were of the utmost simplicity. They were summed up, as must have been anticipated, in the *private and independent estate.*

The land was cleared of its inhabitants: the colonists created estates to suit their own fancy, as they had done in the Saxon plain. They found no difficulty in maintaining their independence each on his own estate. The Odinid chief who had brought them could look for no support except from them: he did not find himself surrounded by a population that was ready to accept the communal system of government and on whom he could depend for support if he wished to domineer. So his position was singularly precarious and restricted, and we shall see that so long as the Saxon race remained pure it always reduced its ruling authorities to a similar position. The Odinid chief was simply considered as a "specialist," who, of his own accord, undertook the office, which was, moreover, to his own advantage, of stirring the people to combined action, in cases where, at a given moment, the help of every individual was required. People were quite ready to respond to this appeal when it seemed justifiable. They acted, in fact, like people who are anxious to improve the public health, and who would listen willingly to an expert physician and conform to the general measures he proposed by acquiescing freely in them as individuals.

Even when it was a question of war—which was, as it were, the Odinid chief's speciality—their action was the same. "When the sovereign was stirred by the necessity for defence or the desire to make war," says Guizot, "he sent a messenger to the villages and through the country side, who carried a naked sword and shouted, 'Let him who doth not wish to be accounted a man of nought leave his house and come to the

battle!'"[1] And those came who chose. And more than once, as history shows, no one came. That was what happened, for instance, to the famous Alfred the Great, the first time he attempted to march against the Danish invaders.

The best method by which the chief could stir the people to act in common was to call them to an assembly, to a "meeting" as we should say nowadays, and debate with them upon the enterprise in question. But in that case too only those came who chose. And in complete contrast to the Celts, who were men belonging to clans, and felt that they were bound by their fidelity to the community to respond to their chief's appeal with alacrity—I was going to say with fury—the Saxons did not put themselves out to go to an assembly unless they individually felt that it was to their interest to do so. So the Assembly was a meeting not of subjects or faithful followers, but of freemen, who thought it to their own interest to be present.

And as the estate was the sole means of support of every individual, it absorbed the greater part of their interest, so that it very soon came about that those who had to work upon their estates themselves, or supervise the working of them in every detail, considered themselves exempt from the necessity of going to waste their time at national meetings. In Switzerland I have noticed that the same reason deters many peasants from attending the Landsgemeinde, or National Assembly in May. Historians consider this indifference as highly characteristic. It became so common that the Assembly, which was at first known as the *Folkmot*—that is to say, the meeting of the people—gradually took the name of *Witenagemot*—that is to say, the meeting of experts, of wise men, of those who were specially competent, and were the natural representatives of men of their own standing.

Thus the Witenagemot was composed on the one hand of rich landowners, people with more leisure, who were more interested in passing events by the very reason of the importance of their affairs, and, on the other, of men of distinction, of the wisest and most expert of the small landowners. The Assembly took its name of Witenagemot from the latter category, which was tacitly supported by public suffrage. The popular name for these unofficial experts was *Witan*, an old word analogous

[1] *Histoire d'Angleterre*, p. 39.

to *wiseman*. The rich proprietors were called *Thegns* or *Ealdormen*, according to the importance of their estates. The Ealdorman was richer than the Thegn, who was himself a landowner of importance.

The Witans, Thegns, and Ealdormen thus formed, as a matter of fact, the public and national Assembly; but every Saxon had the right to attend it.

There was clearly no military aristocracy, no aristocracy of birth; there were simply landowners with equal rights, who, of their own accord, left the direction of public affairs to the care of the richest, and of those most deeply concerned and most skilled in affairs of public interest, and far preferred to devote themselves to their own private affairs, to their estate, when it demanded all their attention. There was no trace whatsoever of feudalism, of the subordination of one landowner to another, of one estate to another. Nor is there anything surprising in this; for there was no reason, no need, for creating the feudal system among the Saxons of England, seeing that nothing prevented them from being free, and that their sovereign governed them so little.

By a general agreement, resulting from a succession of deliberations held by the Witenagemot, the custom was established of levying three taxes to pay for objects of public necessity: (1) the construction and maintenance of fortresses; (2) the construction and maintenance of bridges; (3) the housing and feeding of men who carried on war whenever it occurred.

The Odinid chief, the sovereign, appointed one of the great landowners in each locality of a certain area to see to the collection of the subsidies agreed upon: he was the *sheriff*. His name was derived from *shire*—that is to say, part, portion, division—the name given to the area of land he had to supervise.

As for justice, the neighbours undertook to see it done. In order to secure justice being done, each shire was divided into groups of ten or of a hundred estates. According to the importance of the case, it was tried by groups of ten or groups of a hundred. In each group one of the landowners was appointed by common consent to be responsible for the management of the trials, to receive accusations and choose juries from among the other proprietors, who, under his direction, judged the cases. If the group did not succeed in catching

the fugitive criminal, the victim of the crime was compensated for his loss or injury by the group, for the reason that the criminal, as being a member of the group, formed part of the body of ten or a hundred whose duty it was to see justice done.

But the same thing happened in this case as with the Witenagemot: the Saxons had so little taste for public affairs that they very soon left the landowner they had chosen to judge the cases alone, knowing that he was capable of doing it well since he had been appointed by public opinion. It often happened even that they neglected to choose anyone among them to perform these duties, as they did not feel that the organisation of justice was a pressing need. Offences were probably not very common, or were settled in a friendly manner by those concerned, a method which the Saxons were always inclined to adopt.

Hence it gradually came about that the sovereign officially appointed the proprietor who was considered capable of administering justice to the satisfaction of the neighbourhood.

Landowners holding this office were called *magistrates*, and they were chosen by the sovereign from among the local landowners after being designated by public opinion.

We could not very easily find anything so different from *feudalism* and so far removed from the *truste*!

These institutions, as we shall see, have endured through all periods and all crises in England, because, even when it happened that some sovereign made an attempt to suppress them, they sprang to life again *as being the only means by which any public power could be organised so as not to interfere with the complete independence of every private man, who was of his own choice self-sufficient on his estate, and had no help from a suzerain or from royal government* — that is to say, from feudalism, or from a *truste*.

This contrivance was, as a matter of fact, the natural outcome of the essential characteristic of the Saxon's position, independence on his own estate, as we have just seen; he had no need of a more complicated or more powerful form of government, which would only have annoyed and worried him.

Such being the accepted institutions, the advantage which the Saxons derived from the richness of English soil was that they always had among them some landowners who had

succeeded so well in the management of their estates that they had opportunities of getting to understand and of supporting the public and national interests, which demanded superior abilities such as were developed in private life.

It is in this way that the government of the country, even at a time when its range of interests has widened so enormously as to embrace the two worlds, has not escaped from the hands of the class of free landowners, who all act on their own initiative and not according to the obligations imposed upon them by feudalism or by the domination of public administration. Each free individual estate governed of its own accord without feudalism and without a *truste*.

But there is something of interest to see besides the establishment of this pure Saxon type and its development in a rich and empty land: our main interest is in observing how it triumphed over all the obstacles which events cast in its road.

We shall do this by watching the successive encounters of the Saxons with the Angles, the Danes, and the Normans upon English soil.

CHAPTER XV

THE ASCENDENCY OF THE SAXONS OVER THE ANGLES IN GREAT BRITAIN

THE emigrants from the Saxon plain, led by their two most brilliant Odinid chiefs, Clovis and Cerdic, succeeded in spreading all over the greater part of Northern Gaul and Southern Britain by the beginning of the sixth century. After that they were left to follow their own devices. The Odinids then proceeded to stir up another tribe, the tribe of Angles, who had congregated outside the Saxon plain on the north, but who were not Saxons.

The Angles belonged to the Gothic type—that is to say, to the type of that portion of the Old Germans who, though they had not left the basin of the Baltic, had nevertheless managed to perfect their knowledge of agriculture by finding their way to the rich and secluded lands of the large Scandinavian islands and peninsulas. The tribe in question occupied the eastern slope of Schleswig. A trace of it still remains in the name of the country called Angeln, which was the centre of its activity and is situated between the fiord of Schleswig and that of Flensborg.[1]

In order to make their way to Great Britain, the Angles had only to descend the western slope of Schleswig, a heathery country of peat and sand, utterly different from the eastern slope, and take ship on the shore of the North Sea. The English coast, where they were destined to land and leave their name, lay before them.

The invasion of the Angles had none of the characteristics of the Saxon colonisations, but resembled the great Germanic migrations. The expedition was not composed of a few emigrants who were organised in bands for the occasion and

[1] See Hachette's *Atlas manuel*, map 28.

settled in succession in whatever localities suited their taste, forming small distinct kingdoms and co-operating with each other only when compelled by necessity and only amalgamating by slow degrees; but it was the "flitting" of an entire tribe. Its old home was left absolutely empty; it removed in a body, and went elsewhere to create a single kingdom with as extensive boundaries as possible—a single kingdom, but one which soon became divided.

The Angles, in fact, belonged to the patriarchal and communal form of society like the Goths, and, for the matter of that, like all the Germans of the basin of the Baltic. We shall see how the characteristics of that form of society are exhibited throughout the whole of their short history.

Unlike the Saxons, they attacked Great Britain on the north, at the present frontier between England and Scotland. After making a few attempts to land, and even to settle at points farther south on the east coast, they succeeded in making their way up the Tyne, upon which Newcastle now stands; then they went up the Tweed, which is a little farther north, and finally up the Tees, which is a little farther south. The Britons of the lowlands were surrounded by the new-comers, who did not get a very firm hold of the land, and they proceeded to mix with them. The Britons of the highlands defended themselves to the death. But after numerous bloody encounters, the Angles, who were led by clever Odinid chiefs, and were better armed than their opponents, for they were far more highly civilised, remained masters of the land between the Tweed and the Tees.

The last episode of their conquest is confusingly like the drama of the fortress of Anderida, which made the Saxons masters of the land of Sussex. The Britons did not give the lie to their character. Hemmed in on the one side by the invading Angles, and on the other by the Picts and Scots, whom the Angles had taken care to secure as their allies, they congregated in a spot where their enemies happened to join forces. It was in the narrow neck of land, the kind of isthmus between the Clyde and the Forth, which Septimus Severus had closed by a great wall. Close to the rampart near the mouth of the Clyde was an ancient castle furnished with towers, the largest remains of that fortified

line left standing; it was called the fortress of Caltraeth. The Britons assembled there and in the outskirts all along the Roman entrenchment. "In the midst of merry-making—for it was a national festival, in which several days were usually passed in feasting and drunken scenes—they were unexpectedly attacked. The fight was fierce, and was carried on for seven days outside the fortress, and then within it, till all the defenders were dead at their posts. Three hundred and sixty-three chiefs wearing the gold collar, the badge of the chiefs of the highest rank among the Britons, had set out for Caltraeth with their men: only three returned, among whom was Aneurin, one of the most celebrated bards. He composed a poem on the occasion of that great national disaster, which is still extant." [1]

Once they had secured the three valleys of the Tweed, the Tyne, and the Tees, which border on the sea and served them as entrance and exit, the Angles did not fear to spread to the south like a flood, over the broad lands of York, now the county of Yorkshire, an inland plain whose rivers flow towards the centre of the mainland, and which is separated from the sea by a long line of inhospitable hills. The northern part of the coast consists of crumbling cliffs, while the southern is nothing but an accumulation of mud-banks. The invaders went southwards, and spread over this large basin as far as the estuary of the Humber, which forms its outlet, and up to the river Don, a tributary of the Humber. They formed one large state, to which they gave the name of Northumberland or Northumbria —that is to say, the land north of the Humber.

Their sole chief was Ida, a descendant of Odin in the ninth degree. His Odinid character comes out very clearly. He brought his twelve sons with him, a fact which accentuates his patriarchal and communal character.

All this took place just a century after Hengist's and Horsa's first landing, and twelve or thirteen years after the death of Cerdic (547). It is clear that the Odinids were still in their vigour, and were not even then at the end of their tether.

On Ida's death, Northumbria was divided (559). No such thing had ever occurred in any of the pure Saxon settlements in Great Britain. Two kingdoms were formed whose names were

[1] Augustin Thierry, *Histoire de la Conquête de l'Angleterre*, vol. i. bk. i. p. 26.

taken from the ancient local names: the one called Bernicia was the first part to be conquered, the region round the Tweed, the Tyne, and the Tees; the other was Deïra, the second part to be conquered, the country round York.

Needless to say, the cause of this division was a clan feud, a quarrel such as those that broke out among the Germans or between the sons of Clovis. Division followed reunion and reunion division, according to the varying success of the domestic struggles between Ida's descendants and of the assassinations by which the hostile parties constantly decimated each other's ranks.

Shortly after the first rupture, one of the chiefs led a band of emigrant Angles from Northumbria to the south, and settled between the Wash and the kingdom of Essex. This new settlement took the name of *East Anglia* (571). It consisted of the present counties of Norfolk, Suffolk, and Cambridge. In order to get some idea of the gap which there was between the Angles of East Anglia and those of Northumbria, it must be remembered that all the coast between the Humber and the Wash—that is to say, all the country of Lincoln, except for its far-inland western hills—was a region of lagoons as Holland was originally, an almost uninhabitable land, with nothing but water and mud-flats on every side. It is extremely probable that the expedition of Angles went round by sea, the only easy and open route. East Anglia, which was cut off from Northumbria in this way by the watery desert of Lincoln, was the very place for a party of secessionists. Moreover, it was well shut in by the Wash, by the rivers which flow into it after winding through great marshes, by the territory of the sedentary Saxons of Essex, and by the North Sea.

But the Angles did not proceed with their conquests in the same way as the Saxons. They did not, like the Saxons, take possession of a piece of land which they filled compactly and worked methodically in such a way that they avoided much fighting and always had a precisely defined and well-filled territory. On the contrary, like all the Old Germans who came straight from the basin of the Baltic, they tried to spread over as large an area as possible, and, by dispersing abroad, to invade the whole country regardless of limits. So, not content with Northumbria and East Anglia, they speedily overflowed those two countries and spread over the intermediate inland

territory, which was completely cut off from the sea by the long, deep lagoons of Lincoln of which we have just spoken. The position of the land, which stretched into the interior behind the marshy border, gave rise to the name of *marche*, *merk*—that is to say, the border of the marsh. So the new kingdom occupying that territory was called the kingdom of *Mercia* (585). It was shut in between the Humber and its tributary the Don, the coast of Lincoln, the Wash, the hills on the north of the Thames, then covered with forests, and the Welsh mountains. Thus it bordered on Northumbria, East Anglia, Essex, and Wessex. It filled up the space between them.[1]

Its founder, Crida, was also an Odinid. The most ancient traditions declare him to be a descendant of Odin in the tenth degree. I shall not discuss here the value of such genealogies. I need only say that they are an interesting piece of evidence of the existence of an Odinid type which all these personages represented in the eyes of those who flourished not long after. It must also not be forgotten that it was the principal duty of those bards who were their contemporaries or had preceded them to preserve the memory of all the illustrious descendants, however complicated the relationships might be.

The Angles of Northumbria, who still remained in a compact body, were numerous and strong enough to absorb a part of the population of Britons inhabiting the lowlands. They had, moreover, diminished the native population to a remarkable extent by their devastations. So great was their delight in burning and plundering that the traditional names of "the Incendiary" and "the Plunderer" have been handed down as the appellations of Ida, their first chief, and of Ethelfrid, his grandson. But in East Anglia and Mercia especially they were not numerous enough to people the land, and the local race continued to dwell in their midst in considerable numbers, and here and there still kept apart in small tribal groups. The Angles of Mercia in particular made them their allies, and found them extremely helpful in fighting against Northumbria and East Anglia.

The finest expeditions of that dreaded league were led by Penda and Cadwallon: Penda the leader of the Angles of Mercia, and Cadwallon the leader of the native allies. For

[1] See Foncin's *Atlas Général*, p. 25.

thirty years they were the scourge of the neighbourhood. But though the Saxons on the Thames sometimes had to defend themselves against the Mercians, the struggle was mainly a fratricidal struggle of Angles against Angles (from 626 to 655).

It is impossible to read the history of the Angles in Great Britain without being struck by the fury of the fights in which they won lasting fame. In this respect there can be no comparison between them and the Saxons: they were incomparably more devoted to war.

We have now a fair idea of the salient features of the invasion of the Angles, which was very different from that of the Saxons and very similar to the great Germanic invasions. It can be best compared with the invasion of the Lombards in the north of Italy. The Lombards were the Angles' nearest neighbours on the southern shores of the Baltic. Of all the Old Germans, these two peoples were the most sedentary and the most civilised, thanks to the proximity of that "Scandinavian archipelago" where the Goths and Odinids had, to a remarkable extent, developed agriculture, the useful and decorative arts, and the maritime commerce of the basin of the Baltic, and had fostered an ardent love of war. But the Angles appear to have been superior even to the Lombards. They were, after all, nearer neighbours of the Goths, and, as a matter of fact, were actually of their family. They had more affinities with those rich peasants, who preserved so much independence under the domination of the Odinids, and who produced those isolated emigrants, the founders of the Norwegian and Saxon types.

The same distinction as that to which we referred in speaking of the Jutes, but which does not occur among the pure Saxons, we also find among the Angles: namely, the distinction between Jarls and Karls, between nobles and peasants. In the Saxon kingdoms in Great Britain we have met with no distinction of class and birth, with the single exception of the Odinid chief; there were people called Witans, Thegns, or Ealdormen, by reason of the public confidence they enjoyed or of the different amounts of property they possessed, but their superiority was not based on anything else, and they were certainly all equals. Furthermore, among the Jutes a number of persons were distinguished by the name of Ethel or Etheling (*Edel* in

German), which does not occur among the Saxons, not even among their kings, until the period of their fusion with the Angles. The first Saxon king who took the title of Ethel was, as a matter of fact, Ethelwolf, the son and successor of the Egbert by whom the Heptarchy—that is to say, the seven kingdoms of Kent, Sussex, Wessex, Essex, Northumbria, East Anglia, and Mercia—were united to form the kingdom of England at the beginning of the ninth century.

Another feature by which we recognise the relationship of the Angles with the Old Germans is the great suite of faithful followers which accompanied persons of distinction. This domesticity, as it were, of persons of high rank existed only to a very small extent, and was but little apparent among the Saxon kings, the Ealdormen, and the Thegns. On the contrary, it was very frequent and very marked among the Angles. A very good idea of it can be obtained by reading the *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum* of Bede, if only the reader distinguishes carefully when the writer is speaking of Saxon countries and when of the lands of the Angles: for he often confounds the two races under the general appellation of "Angles and Saxons," and even under either of those names without the other, because in his time (673 to 735) a sort of fusion had already taken place, due not only to the increased intercourse between the two peoples, but to the beginning of a political union: Ina, King of Wessex, had made the superiority of his Saxons felt throughout the south and also in Mercia (725), and, seventy-five years afterwards, Egbert, one of his successors, attempted to unite the whole Heptarchy in a single kingdom.

These "faithful followers," who were no more no less than members of a *truste*, were often admitted to the table of the man they served, and, in the Latin language used by Bede, bear the thoroughly Teutonic title of "companions" (*comites*), the special meaning of which can be easily distinguished by the context from the other applications of the same term, which are, by the way, very numerous.

Bede's Anglo-Saxon translator renders the word by *Gesith*, which is the proper word in the Teutonic tongue to denote the "faithful followers." The Franks formed their name vassal from this word. Bede calls the faithful followers of a lower order *milites* (knights); and there again it is necessary to dis-

tinguish, by help of the context, the cases where this appellation has a special meaning, and where it is extended to military functions of different kinds. Moreover, whatever may be the terms, this fact is evident from the details of the story: that personages of importance among the Angles had a suite of "faithful followers," who held a position of far greater importance than those composing the very simple household of even the King of the Saxons.

Furthermore, the Angles are differentiated from the Saxons and are marked as Old Germans by the immense size of their domains. They seem to have taken possession of the land as if it were a store of property to be distributed, and not a productive force to be turned to account. They were still bent upon the mere possession of the land, quite apart from the labour to be expended on it. We remarked this before, when we described them as hastening to spread, without any reason, over an indefinite area of Great Britain. Moreover, these large properties corresponded to the lofty positions ascribed by tradition to their class of nobles with their suites of faithful followers.

The natural inconveniences and the inevitable consequences attendant upon this peculiar system of holding property are very manifest in the history of the Angles. Whilst donations of property were very rare and very small among the Saxons, they were innumerable and very large among the Angles: donations were continually made, and were of unlimited size. We know this from the fact of the resistance made by the Church itself, which, after the final conversion of the Angles, became the recipient of a great portion of these immoderate gifts, and was the first to recognise their abuses and dangers.

The Church does not profess to have any definite system of dealing with property: wherever her influence extends, she submits to the different systems of social organisation she happens to come across; she necessarily perceives their inconveniences or their advantages according to their nature and intrinsic value. Or, if privileges are granted to her, they are not seldom granted with an insufficient knowledge of the conditions which regulate the society of the neighbourhood, and in such cases they do not in the end tûrn to her good or to that of secular society.

That is what happened with the Angles. Allured by the exemptions from taxes and by other advantages which had become the privilege of the monastic order, many of the nobles had, upon request, obtained immense grants of land from the kings and the national assemblies under the pretext of founding monasteries upon them. "Sometimes the monasteries were really founded, but they had nothing monastic or even Christian about them. The recipients of gifts of land gathered about them a handful of their vassals (that is to say, of their faithful followers) or of secularised monks who had been expelled from regular monasteries; they called themselves abbots, and they all lived with their wives and children on territory which had been extorted from the nation, with no other concern than to provide for their households and their material interests. Sometimes the recipient of the grant of land used it for his profit, and never gave a thought to the pretext he had alleged in order to get it; he founded no monastery, not even a sham one such as I have just described. For this reason the Venerable Bede did not scruple to call upon the kings and bishops to repeal, with the sanction of the national assemblies, every one of those fraudulent and scandalous grants." [1]

It must be observed that this method of exploiting the country against which Bede protested was anything but Saxon. All that we have just said refers expressly to Northumbria, the main settlement of the Angles. This peculiarity could not entirely escape the notice of historians. Montalembert remarked it. He writes: "*Donationes stultissimæ*, says Bede, in speaking of the gifts of the kings of Northumbria." [2]

But it was not Northumbria alone which was in this evil plight. Similar facts concerning Mercia are brought to light a little later at the second Council of Cloveshoe, a partly religious, partly secular assembly (747), the most important that took place during the eighth century in Great Britain, and presided over by the King of Mercia in person. "The Council enjoins the bishops to visit the monasteries—if such they can be called—which, in contempt of the Christian religion, avarice and tyranny keep in the hands of laymen who have acquired possession of them, not by an act of divine ordination, but by

[1] Montalembert, *Les Moines d'Occident*, bk. xvi. chap. i., or vol. v. p. 205.
[2] *Ibid.* p. 200.

a trick dictated by human presumption.[1] But there are no indications that vigorous measures were adopted for the suppression of the disgraceful abuses which had produced these mock-monasteries. Improper concessions of public land continued to be made either to false monks, or, what was far more frequent, to powerful laymen, till the end of the Anglo-Saxon period, and produced serious disturbances in the development of the population and in the condition of freemen, which favoured Danish and Norman invasions. But the Council of Cloveshoe had to repress other abuses besides secular usurpation. . . . The twelve bishops, after debating with the King of Mercia and his nobles, forbade monks, and especially nuns, to make any change in their clothing, in what they wore either on their feet or on their heads, which would tend to make their costume more like that of lay-people.[2] The Council also forbade them to frequent the houses of laymen, and, above all, to reside in them ;[3] it enjoined the abbots and abbesses to spare no efforts to keep alive in their communities and in the schools belonging to them the love of study and of reading, as being the best preservative against the vanities and lusts of the world,[4] and to make their monasteries the abode of silence, study, prayer, and labour. It censured and proscribed the presence of poets, minstrels, musicians, and jesters in religious houses ; likewise the prolonged visits of laymen, who used to be allowed to enter the monasteries and wander about in the cloisters ; likewise the sumptuous and prolonged feasts mingled with coarse jesting ;[5] and last, but not least, that fatal tendency to drunkenness which not only made the monks drink to excess themselves, but force their lay guests to drink with them." [6]

"But among the abuses which that watchful and paternal authority wished to repress, there was not one which was not originally due to the laxity which the sudden access of a superabundance of wealth had introduced into the monasteries. For that wealth brought other dangers as well as the laxity within the monasteries. It kindled the fire of covetousness on all sides. Sometimes the real heirs of a lawful abbot of a

[1] Cap. 5. [2] Cap. 28. [3] Cap. 29.
[4] Cap. 7. [5] Cap. 20.
[6] Cap. 21. Montalembert, vol. v. 206-209.

regular monastery came after his death and forcibly took possession of the monastic estates under the pretext that the abbey had been the property of the deceased man and that they had an acquired right over it with the sole obligation of supporting the monks. Or again, the kings and princes came and established themselves in a large monastery, as if it were a place of rest and pleasure, with all their equipage, their train of officials, of huntsmen, squires, and footmen, who had to be lodged, and fed, and conveyed from place to place, as well as the dogs and the falcons. The fact that there were privileges exempting certain monasteries from the duty of receiving such visits proves what an habitual and onerous duty it must have been. Other kings, again, who were far more exacting and more feared, revoked the grants made by their predecessors, and claimed the lands that had been so given. Their claims and those of the monks had to be debated before the Witenagemot, whose decisions could not always be in accordance with the rights of the weaker party. The nobles and men of importance were only too ready to follow the king's example. They claimed the lands that had been granted by their ancestors, or seized those that lay near. Proofs of their depredations still exist in the numerous charters which enjoined more or less complete restitution of the property within a longer or shorter time, but which show at the same time that violence and rapacity only too often took the place of the pious munificence of the past." [1]

All this is evidence of a society in decay.

It was the beginning of the eighth century. "The star of Northumbria," says Montalembert, "had already paled, never to glow again." [2] The same can be said of Mercia. As for East Anglia, it was too insignificant to attract the special attention of historians. Northumbria, as we saw, was the kingdom of the Angles *par excellence*. "So far," says Lingard, on reaching a slightly earlier epoch in his *Histoire d'Angleterre*, "a great deal of space has been needed to describe the deeds and attainments of the Northumbrian princes; a few pages will suffice for the history of their successors, which the reader will find to be nothing but a continuous series of acts of treason, perfidy, and murder." And a little farther on: "It is un-

[1] Montalembert, vol. v. pp. 212–214.

[2] *Ibid.* p. 108.

necessary to follow the history of these princes further: during the previous century Northumbria had been the scène of a succession of betrayals and murders which could scarcely be paralleled in the history of any other country." [1]

And it was only a hundred and fifty years since the Angles had invaded Great Britain.

It is easy to prophesy, from what we have already observed, which race will soon have the ascendency in Great Britain—that of the Saxons or of the Angles. We now find no difficulty in understanding how it came about that the small Saxon race which had settled in the south of Great Britain rapidly absorbed the brilliant race of Angles, who were very numerous and were the most civilised of the Germanic races next to the Goths, and masters of a fine stretch of country reaching from the centre to the north, the richest lands in Great Britain.

But how did the Saxons gain their ascendency?

They acted in exactly the same way towards the Angles in Great Britain as the English in modern times acted towards the French with whom at the start they came into contact in America.

Anyone who compares a map of England in the sixth century with a map of North America in the eighteenth—that is to say, before 1713—cannot help being struck by the extraordinary resemblance of the situations.[2]

Just in the same way as the Saxons, after the settlement of the Angles, were congregated between the Channel and the hills which rise to the north of the Thames, while the Angles filled, or seemed to fill, all the rest, as far as the undetermined and distant boundaries beyond which dwelt what was left of the native population, so the English before 1713 occupied only the strip of territory between the Atlantic and the Alleghany Mountains from New Hampshire to Georgia and Florida, while the French extended their possessions behind the Alleghany Mountains to the north, to the west, to the south indefinitely in the enormous regions which now form Canada and the United States: Hudson Bay, the basin of the St. Lawrence, the Great Lakes, the huge valley of the Mississippi, all belonged to them.

[1] *Hist. d'Angl.*, i. chap. iii. pp. 84, 87.

[2] See, among others, Foncin's *Atlas Général*, map 25, and map 42, the figure on the right hand, at the top.

The names of Maine, Quebec, St. Louis, Louisiana, and many others still bear witness to it.

Well, a century had not elapsed before that English race which had settled on the shores of the Atlantic had absorbed everything, assimilated everything, reduced everything to its own type.

How had it been able to accomplish that change? By colonising the land better than the other inhabitants; by placing the government, which was based on freedom and equity, in the hands of "the gentry," as we have already seen done by the Saxons; by ensuring in that way their own safety and development, while the others became rapidly disorganised; by being, in consequence, more capable of maintaining an armed resistance in the case of war; by arousing, as another immediate consequence, the positive and practical sympathies of the very people they were attempting to bring into union with themselves; by leaving them, after victory, free to govern themselves subject to a very strict political union; by gradually spreading so as to occupy the empty lands, by taking the lead for which their capacity fitted them, and by thus making them in the end adopt their own methods—that is to say, the best.

If we examine this process point by point—and it is easy to follow every step of it—if we watch the absolutely natural and steady working of the movement, which is almost as regular as that of a piece of self-acting mechanism, we shall see that it is all an exact and literal reproduction of the development of the Saxons in Great Britain as compared with that of the Angles.

All we have to do is to take up our history and read it. Let us go over each point.

Our first points are already established:

1. I said, "By colonising the land better than the other inhabitants." This we have just noticed. We noticed it, in fact, when we compared the two different ways of taking possession of the land: on the one hand, we saw the Saxons settling in small, compact colonies; on the other, the Angles invading immense areas and being constantly involved in fighting. We saw it again in the disorders relating to property which broke out in Northumbria and Mercia. They reached such a pitch that Bede, who wrote about them, was driven to

fear that the ruin of Northumbria was imminent. After earnestly entreating that the concessions stigmatised in his book as *stultissimæ*, which were granted to laymen who made a mere pretence of religion, should be withdrawn, he adds, "You know better than I do that there are so many estates occupied by false monks, that nothing remains to be given to the sons of the nobles and of ancient warriors, so that they are obliged to cross the sea, abandoning the fatherland they might have defended to waste their manhood in debauchery and idleness for lack of any suitable place for settlement. . . . The future will show if any good will result from it!" [1]

2. I said, "By placing the government, based on freedom and equity, in the hands of the gentry, as we have already seen done by the Saxons." Among the Angles, on the contrary, we read, on the one hand, of the behaviour of the large class of hereditary nobles, who used the most deplorable means to procure themselves property. And we might add the spectacle presented by the King of Mercia (796), distributing a pound of silver to each man present "who was of noble birth, but was without landed possessions." [2] On the other hand, wherever the book opens, we read of nothing but interminable and incessant tribal struggles between rival chiefs, acts of despotism, in the midst of which first Northumbria, the country with the purest Angle population, and then Mercia, foundered. It is enough for us to glance at Lingard's concise remarks, which we quoted above. At this time the Saxons still used only the three distinctions of Witans, Thegns, and Ealdormen: *Ego Ina* (720), *Dei Gratiâ, West Saxonum rex, exhortatione Aldermanorum meorum, Seniorum* (that is, the Thegns) *et Sapientium* (Witans) *regni mei* . . .: that is the way in which they testified to a solemn public declaration.

3. I said, "By ensuring their own safety and development, by colonising the land in this way, and by promoting self-government, whilst the others became rapidly disorganised." This follows inevitably from the preceding step, as is proved by what follows.

4. I said, "By being, in consequence, more capable of maintaining an armed resistance in case of war." Mercia benefited by the decadence of Northumbria, and seemed to

[1] *Hist.* v. 23. [2] Lingard, i. p. 97.

threaten to domineer over the country. "In the south the kings of Wessex fought impatiently against its ascendency . . . they were even compelled to send some troops to its support. But at the end of the year 752, Cuthred, King of Wessex, attempted to deliver his country, and held his own boldly against the Mercians. In the open space between the two armies, Edilhun, who carried the golden dragon, the banner of Wessex, slew with his own hand the standard-bearer of Ethelbald, King of Mercia. At last, chance brought Ethelbald himself face to face with Edilhun; but the King of Mercia recoiled before the gigantic figure and bloody sword of his adversary, and set his men the example of headlong flight. That defeat destroyed the supremacy of Mercia for a time." [1] There we get a glimpse of the energy of a race that does not despair nor fears the most illustrious adversaries. Events, after that, began to take another turn. Only half a century later, the famous Egbert, whom the Witenagemot had previously rejected for another candidate, and who had prudently retired to the court of Charlemagne, was elected King of Wessex. He spent nine years in preparing his people to make war, and then he attacked the Mercians, who gave way after a single battle, in 823, at Ellandun. Their efforts to rally were of no avail. Egbert thus found himself on the very frontiers of Northumbria: "The Northumbrian chiefs, with Eanfrid at their head, came out to meet him at Dore, hailed him as their overlord, and gave him hostages as a guarantee of their obedience." [2] This brings me to the fifth link in the sequence we are following, namely:

5. I said, "By arousing, as another immediate consequence, the positive and practical sympathies of the very people they were trying to bring into union with themselves."

6. I added, "By leaving them, after victory, free to govern themselves, but insisting on a very strict political union." We have just seen that though he would have been able to conquer the Northumbrians, Egbert contented himself with their adhesion and their guarantees, and left them their own chiefs and their provincial independence. He did exactly the same for Mercia after having thoroughly defeated it. "Egbert allowed Wiglaf, the king elected by the Mercians in the midst of their defeat, to keep his sceptre on condition that he paid an annual

[1] Lingard, i. p. 91. [2] *Ibid.* i. pp. 110, 111.

tribute, and took an oath of allegiance, and did homage to the King of Wessex." [1]

In this way the Heptarchy came to an end, but was reunited under the rule of the Saxons. It was the founding of the first United States of England by the Saxons. The leader of this unified state continued to bear the significant title of King of the Saxons of the West. He was sovereign of all the Anglo-Saxon country.[2] There can be no doubt about the triumph of the Saxons. It has been sufficiently well proved. The Angles had been absorbed.

7. Finally I said, "By gradually spreading so as to occupy the empty lands, by taking the lead for which their capacity fitted them, and by thus making them in the end adopt their own methods—that is to say, the best!" We shall find that with time this was accomplished. In the end we shall see that England was completely *Saxonised*; we shall find Saxon institutions spread all over the country and enduring through all time. It was only a question of time. Given these two races side by side, with the difference in their worth, and there is only one issue possible; but this kind of operation, in which violence has no part, takes time. However, we have already seen how the small Frankish emigrations assimilated a portion of the half-German, half-Roman, half-Celtic population in the midst of which they settled in Gaul. We also saw, and shall see again, how the Franks of Austrasia assimilated what remained of the Old Germans in Germany, and all the Slavs and Wends who gradually drifted in. It was a smaller task for the Saxons to assimilate the Angles, and consequently the assimilation was more rapid and more complete. As a matter of fact, the Angles were more closely related than all the other tribes of Old Germans to the Saxons. In Schleswig they were very near the Saxon plain. It is probable that among the emigrants who became Saxons on the shores of the North Sea there were some who had come from the country of Angeln, from Schleswig, from the homes of the Angles. Moreover, the Angles, like all the Goths, were skilled in agriculture. It made them realise the importance of the estate. They had still to shake off the last patriarchal traditions, which had already become considerably weakened, as usually happens among skilled agri-

[1] Lingard, i. p. 111.

[2] *Ibid.* i. p. 111, note.

culturists. Their removal into England brought about the final disorganisation of their society, and once their families became unstable, their fate was inevitable. The Saxons then brought them under their rule and easily assimilated the exceptionally fine and masterly qualities peculiar to that race. As for the type which exhibited inferior elements incapable of transformation, it gradually disappeared in the shock of ordinary competition as one generation succeeded another.

But, unfortunately for the race of Angles, unfortunately also for the Saxons, this beneficial work of assimilation, of *Saxonisation*, was almost at once disturbed, checked, delayed in its results by a new event—the Danish invasion.

A new drama was enacted which once more revealed the superiority of the social organisation of the Saxons of Great Britain.

We shall be present at that great drama : we shall watch the heroes of our history growing up, and our knowledge of social facts will be thereby increased.

CHAPTER XVI

THE ASCENDENCY OF THE SAXONS OVER THE DANES IN GREAT BRITAIN

I HAVE already said that the general condition of a people is reflected in the means of transport it uses, because those means are obviously the result of its private resources and of the ability of its public authorities.

We have watched the development of the Saxons in Great Britain from their landing on the shores of Kent under the leadership of Hengist and Horsa, chieftains of the Jutes, to the establishment of their sway over the whole island, with the exception of the mountains of the west and the north, under the leadership of Egbert, King of Wessex and conqueror of the Angles (449–827). Now that we have a knowledge of the social system they founded, we shall be able to see how far their system of transports corresponds to it. This will come out very clearly if we simply make a comparison between them and the Franks.

The emigrants from the Saxon plain entered Gaul and Great Britain at almost the same time, and the two emigrations also produced their Charlemagne and their Egbert the Great at almost the same time. But Egbert's army went on foot; Charlemagne's on horseback. And Egbert's kingdom was scarcely an eighth of the size of Charlemagne's empire. The difference in their means of transport and in their relative powers of expansion exactly corresponded to the divergency which the Franks and the Anglo-Saxons showed in their social organisations.

With the Franks the Saxon type had been overridden; with the Anglo-Saxons it had developed normally.

The type had been overridden among the Franks because

the small estates had been obliged to bind themselves closely to the large estates: the result was an aristocracy that ruled with a firm hand. Now, wherever an elite body governs the rest with a firm hand, progress is very rapid: the men of ability direct everything without resistance. This accounts for the magnificent progress the Franks made and for their extraordinary extension of territory. The great landowners, who had taken the lead in war as in everything else, had ended by reserving it for themselves and their vassals, who were also rich proprietors. They were both provided with all that was necessary for warfare on horseback. Besides, that means of transport was absolutely essential to success when it was a question of distant expeditions. Thus the principal means of transport of the Franks was the direct outcome of their social constitution.

With the Anglo-Saxons, on the contrary, the Saxon type had developed normally. Once the Celts had been put to flight, each Saxon emigrant had been able to make an entirely independent estate for himself, and had maintained himself upon it. It was really only the continuation of the state of things in the Saxon plain, with this difference, however, that in Great Britain the abundance of available land and the fertility of the soil supplied the elite with the means of growing great. But those who knew how to use it, grew great solely on their own estate, not on the estates of others; they extended and improved their own property, but acquired no rights of ruling the lands of others. Those who were less clever were absolute masters of their own estates just as much as the more talented. For this reason the nation as a whole progressed far more slowly than that of the Franks; the more talented had infinitely less advantage over the others. The *gentleman*—that is, the leading man among a group of freemen—did not hold sway like the *suzerain*, who was lord of the district and accepted as such by oath. The people followed the *gentlemen* when it pleased it to do so; it allowed them to act in its place, and profited by their ability when it found it advantageous. A government managed on this friendly system was far from being able to conduct affairs in the same way as the recognised authority of feudalism.

In the end, as we saw, it was those whom we called small

landowners, those who owned just enough land to enable them by their labour to live an independent life, it was they who remained the masters and had the last word. It lay with them chiefly to decide the question of war, by rising of their free will at the call of the herald of war, or by staying peacefully at home. As matters stood, they scarcely ever had a chance of becoming knights, and the horse was a kind of luxury in their eyes: they generally used oxen for ploughing. So if they went out to battle, they went on foot. Their principal weapon, which was an object of dread when wielded by them, was the labourer's axe, with which they themselves used to clear the land.

It would be impossible to find a better illustration than the comparison of the Franks with the Saxons of Great Britain of the fact that different systems of transport and unequal powers of expansion are the direct results of divergent social organisations.

The difference becomes all the more palpable if we embrace in one glance as it were the feudal nobleman on the one hand, mounted on his horse and covered by a suit of steel armour, representing in his own person a whole fighting regiment, and on the other, the Saxon peasant, on foot, armed with an axe, and fighting in the serried ranks of his comrades under cover of a palisade or earth entrenchment. The contrast is brought out in a peculiarly striking, dramatic, and, I was going to say, picturesque manner in the first trial of arms between Norman feudalism and Anglo-Saxon peasantry on the field of Hastings. Although we have not come to that point in our history—which, after all, is not so very far off—I will quote a short account of it because it is a vivid illustration of what I have just said. "The (feudal) army was in sight of the Saxon camp to the north-west of Hastings. A Norman called Taillefer pressed his horse forward in front of the line of battle and sang the song of Charlemagne and Roland, then famous throughout Gaul. While he sang he played with his sword, throwing it high into the air and catching it again in his right hand. The Normans echoed the refrain. The Anglo-Saxons, who were all on foot and formed a solid and compact body behind their palisades about the standard, which was planted in the ground, received their assailants with mighty blows from

their axes, which, with a single back-stroke, splintered their lances and cut through their mail armour. The Normans found that they could not make their way into the redoubts nor tear up the stakes, and, worn out by their fruitless attack, withdrew towards the division commanded by William. The duke then commanded his archers to advance and shoot their arrows into the air, so that they might fall on the other side of the rampart in front of the enemy's camp. Several of the English were wounded—most of them in the face—as the result of this manœuvre. Harold himself was pierced through the eye, but none the less he continued to fight and give commands. But the Normans were driven back from one of the entrances to the camp till they came to a great ravine covered with brushwood and grass, where their horses stumbled and rolled them over in confusion, so that they perished in great numbers. For a moment the army from the other side of the water was seized with panic. Rumour whispered that the duke was killed, and flight began. William threw himself before the fugitives and barred their way, threatening them and striking them with his lance. The knights returned to the redoubts, but met with no better success in forcing the gates or making a breach. Then the duke conceived a stratagem by which to make the English leave their position and break ranks. He commanded a thousand knights to advance, and then take flight at once. At sight of this feigned rout, the Saxons lost their sang-froid (or rather, were deceived); they all joined in the pursuit with their axes slung round their necks. At a certain distance, a body of men, posted there for the purpose, joined the fugitives, who turned back; and the English, who were taken by surprise in the disorder of their pursuit, were attacked on all sides by lance-thrusts and sword-blows, which they were unable to ward off as both their hands were employed in wielding their great axes. Once their ranks were broken, the barriers of the redoubts were broken through; knights and foot-soldiers made their way in; but the fight still raged fiercely, hand to hand, in dire confusion. William had his horse killed under him; the King Harold and his two brothers fell dead at the foot of their standard. Without their leader, their standard gone, all that remained of the English army prolonged the struggle till night fell, and the combatants of both sides could

no longer recognise friend from foe except by their language." [1]

This same Harold, King of England, who fell at the battle of Hastings, had had to repair the error and make good the defeat of a certain man named Raoul, who had come from among the Franks and had been charged with the defence of the country near the Welsh frontier. This man had conceived the idea "of summoning the Saxons to arms in order to exercise them against their will in continental tactics, and tried to make them fight on horseback, which was quite contrary to the customs of their race: *Anglos contra morem in equis pugnare jussit.*" [2]

These facts are beyond doubt and command belief. Moreover, it is needless to add that the system of all-sufficient estates, supplying all the wants of their inhabitants, restricted the ordinary means of transport among the Anglo-Saxons even more than among the Franks, since in England the estates were not attached to each other as in the feudal system, and remained wholly independent. It is needless to insist further on this point.

There is one more remark to be added on the question of transports, which become of great interest when we see their connection with the constitution of societies.

The means of transport, both public and private, civil and military, of which we have just spoken, were the means of transport ordinarily used by the Saxons in Great Britain; but the Saxons had used a means specially suited to the occasion in order to reach England: namely, navigation. What influence had it had upon them?

Almost none, except that it cut them off from the Continent; and that implies that they did not habitually make use of navigation. This is a point that should not be overlooked, for we are only too ready to imagine, though quite wrongly, that because the Saxons emigrated to an island, and because they were the prototypes of the English of to-day, who are masters of the sea, that they must have been navigators.

The Saxon was essentially a peasant, not a sailor. The

[1] Aug. Thierry, *La Conquête de l'Angleterre*, vol. i. bk. iii. pp. 232–233.
[2] *Ibid.* pp. 184–185.

same thing was true of the Norwegian.[1] I represented him as spurning his fishing-boat as soon as he set eyes on the Saxon plain. He never took to his boat again except on rare occasions, when he wished to remove to a distant land and stay there. He thereby resembled the Pelasgian: he colonised by sea, but his colonies were agricultural. We have a clear enough idea of the difference between the Jute and the Saxon—the one a sailor, the other a peasant—to avoid falling into the error of imagining that the Saxons were navigators. And so little were they inclined to a seafaring life that we see later on that they were obliged to resort to political measures in order to create a naval force, almost in the same way as the Romans were obliged to create a fleet with which to fight the Carthaginians.

But that rare use of navigation which brought the Saxons to Great Britain from the Continent had the effect of protecting them for six centuries from the feudal system, which gradually spread over the Continent, where the rough conflict between Saxon liberty and Romano-barbarian government made its existence necessary. So that before the Saxons of Great Britain came into contact with the feudal system, they had had time to develop under their normal conditions, and were able to resist the terrible shock which we shall presently describe.

The explanation we have just given of the means of transport used in the social system of the Anglo-Saxons was all the more necessary because we are about to see the Saxons of Great Britain engaged in a fierce struggle with a people whose existence depended upon the habitual use of that very means of transport which was only accidental and exceptional among the Saxons: namely, navigation.

It is of the Danes that I am speaking.

Scarcely had Egbert the Great bound together Angles and Saxons and united the Heptarchy under the domination of Wessex, when the Danes threatened Great Britain with a fresh invasion.

In accordance with the most natural impulse of all those who approach England with some knowledge of her coast-line, and who do not go there, like the Angles, to see what

[1] See above, Chap. III. pp. 65, 66.

unexploited land might still be found there, they landed in the south. They made a bad choice. There, of all places, they came into direct contact with Saxons: they were completely repulsed. But when they made an attempt upon the territory of the Angles, by then but little Saxonised, they found their way in, sometimes after a fight, sometimes without resistance, and had no difficulty in taking possession of the land from the north as far south as the Thames. At that point they were again met by the Saxons and held in check for a long time. This shows very well how differently the two races, the Saxons and the Angles, resisted the enemy a very short time after the union of their lands.

It was in the year 867 that the Danes made their victorious landing on the coasts of East Anglia and Northumbria; three years later (870) they crossed Mercia and reached the north of the Thames; and for eight years (870–878) the Saxons held them there in check.[1]

Thus it came about that the ancient Anglian kingdoms which Egbert had left as autonomous provinces under their own chiefs in 827, were replaced in 870 by a Danish kingdom to the north of the Thames. The land south of the Thames remained wholly in the hands of the Saxons.

So our Saxons were face to face with a new social formation, that of the Danes who had taken possession of the lands of the Angles.

Who were these Danes?

There were Danes and Danes. There were the Danish pirates or adventurers, and the ordinary Danes. They came to England one after the other: the former between 867 and 934; the latter from 1004 to 1041. They did not belong to exactly the same form of society.

Let us begin with those who were the first to come to England, the Danish pirates. Their form of society sheds some light on the later history of the Odinids which is of interest.

The Angles, living as they did in Schleswig, were the nearest neighbours of the Goths, and the two tribes were the last remnants of all the Old Germans who had once lived in the Baltic plain, and who left it uninhabited before the end of the fifth

[1] See, for a detailed account, Aug. Thierry, *La Conquête de l'Angleterre*, vol. i. pp. 91–102.

century. After the Odinids had brought the Angles over to Great Britain, there was nothing left for them to do but to stir up their own country. And they rivalled one another in their efforts to arouse its inhabitants. In the place of the Old Germans, the Slavs or Wends had come to the Baltic plain and occupied all the vacant land they found there; but I have already shown [1] how it was that the Odinids had less hold over them than over the Germans. Nevertheless, we shall see later on that they thought it no harm to make stirring expeditions among the Slav population.

In their own country, the Odinids, in their quality of Jarls or nobles, ruled the Karls, or Gothic peasants, fairly well on the whole, and received their food supplies from them in consideration of their military protection. Each Jarl, then, managed a small part of the population as cleverly as he could. Gothic territory was divided into a multitude of small principalities. Generally speaking, there were as many as there were small islands, but the large islands and large peninsulas to the south of Sweden and the north-east of Jutland were divided into as many principalities as there were promontories and slips of land between the innumerable fiords. When the south of the Baltic was once for all completely cleared of Old Germans, and these Jarls found themselves left face to face, they turned upon each other, as was inevitable. Each tried to crush the other and get the mastery. Then, and not till then, was a movement set on foot for uniting all these small principalities: the strongest and most cunning of the Jarls tried to get possession of the country at the expense of the others.

Those who were worsted in the struggle, and were deprived of all their land, and could find no more German tribes to press into their service for further conquests, took to living on the sea in large vessels, and picking up, as recruits, any stray persons on the coast who were anxious, either for good or bad reasons, to leave their country. They were called *Vikings*, from the word *vik*, bay, harbour—that is to say, inhabitants of the safe inlets of the sea. Those who had gained distinction among them and round whom the others rallied with their recruits, or those who joined them after having lost the small

[1] See above, Chap. VI. p. 100.

kingdoms which they had at first succeeded in founding by driving out a certain number of men like themselves, took the title of kings, but of *Kings of the Sea*, for the sea was the only domain they had.

Such was the origin of the renowned Vikings and Kings of the Sea. The greater the number of Jarls that were turned out of the country in the struggle for the land, the more the Vikings increased in number; and as, by the process of selection, the more powerful came to be driven out after the weaker, so the Vikings increased in power and importance. In the end the Gothic population was grouped under a small number of chiefs: the rest had gone to swell the numbers of the Vikings. They spent their time in making raids upon the Scandinavian coast and carrying off everything they needed. This form of occupation brought them some kind of compensation for the loss of their own estates: they called it *strandhug*. But those of the Odinids who had succeeded in triumphing over all the others on land were not long in organising a good police force, which worked all along the coast on a methodical system. This obliged the Sea Kings to take to the open sea and seek distant lands as a field for their piracy.

That was the beginning of the so-called Danish and Norman invasions. They began at the end of the reigns of Charlemagne and Egbert the Great.

It is easy to imagine the astonishment of the people living on the coasts on seeing these extraordinary invaders for the first time. The Danish invasions were regular incursions of sailors, and not the mere landing of people who had been brought across the sea. The method adopted by these new invaders—a method that no other invaders had used—was to go as far as possible up the large rivers in order to reach the very heart of the country straight away. We saw how the Saxons landed at the seaports on the south of Great Britain, while the Angles took shelter in the little estuaries of the Tyne, the Tweed, and the Tees; but the Danes threaded their way right up the river Humber, just in the same way as the Normans, a little later, made their way up the Seine and the Loire as far as they could.

Here, then, we have a social type very different from that of the Saxon and that of the Angle; it is neither a homogeneous

aggregate of peasant emigrants of the particularist type, nor an agricultural people with a communal system of society, who are transplanted in a body from one place to another. It is a medley of numbers of expelled Odinids accustomed to both land and sea fighting, and of a multitude of peasants of every sort and kind, drawn chiefly from among the Gothic agriculturists and townsfolk of the particularist form of society, from the Norwegian seacoast fishermen, and from the Saxon peasants of the particularist type. Each member of this medley was seeking his fortune, but each in his own manner, each with a different object. The aim of the Odinids, great and small alike, was to exploit other races by getting them under their political domination and making them pay tribute. The emigrants of patriarchal habits, the Goths, were divided into a superior class, who wished to practise agriculture on the communal system, and a mass of nobodies, who looked forward to a life of rapine and pillage. The emigrants of the particularist form of society who came straight from their seacoast fishing, the Norwegians, were quite ready to take part in a succession of sea excursions and accept all the profits to be gained from piracy and commerce, but only for a time ; their ultimate object was to settle down on independent estates when they had become rich and had reached a mature age. Finally, the particularist emigrants who had come from a life of agriculture pure and simple, the Saxons, above all aspired to the possession of independent estates, which were to be secured as speedily as possible.

The diversity of elements composing these bodies of Danish invaders, which reappeared later on in the bands of Norman invaders, admirably explains their habits of life. Generally speaking, they very seldom settled in a place. They found it very difficult to stop anywhere ; they passed from country to country, even when they had won a victory and swept a region clear. When they did stop, there was a whole class among them which laid claim to a certain superiority, and lived by the power it exercised over the rest, while under that class there was a whole soldiery which did not live only on its pay, but on the harvests of rapine and crime. Then, on certain well-defined areas, agricultural settlements of the Saxon type appeared, and from them sprang a well-established and

enduring race; but that race was the outcome of the Saxons and Norwegians. The other invaders were gradually eliminated.

It is possible, then, from an analysis of their social system, to give the following precise definition of the Danish pirates. They were the descendants of patriarchal warriors (the Odinids) or of patriarchal husbandmen (the Goths), who, by using arms as instruments of labour, and navigation as their means of transport, lived on the produce of the farms of others, either by methodical plundering, or by a systematic military domination and collection of tribute money. They brought in their train a certain number of emigrants, either accustomed to seacoast fishing (the Norwegians), or trained to agriculture in particularist families (the Saxons), who were both desirous of making independent estates for themselves.

We have thus sorted out this great medley of people, and there is not a single characteristic point in the invasions of the Danish pirates which does not become intelligible by the help of these preliminary statements, and does not in its turn corroborate them. Any historian, no matter whom, will supply a superabundance of evidence for these facts.

To sum up. The result of the social constitution of the Danish invaders was that they could only occupy Great Britain by force of arms, or at most plant here and there about the country emigrants of the particularist form of society. As a matter of fact, nothing further resulted from their occupation of the whole of the territory peopled by the Angles, over which they spread, as we saw, in three years, from 867 to 870. Both great and small retained their arms, took the direction and execution of public affairs into their own hands, and lived, like governors and government officials, at the expense of the inhabitants, on the money contributed by the taxes, which were levied in a systematic or arbitrary manner. They were checked abruptly on the north side of the Thames, at the frontier of the Saxon people. The Saxons had chosen as their leader, by their usual method of election, a descendant of Cerdic and Egbert, one worthy of his fathers: Alfred, who well deserved the epithet of Great.

We are now coming to one of those occasions when the Saxon race in England behaved most memorably, and we shall be able to realise still more vividly the mainsprings of its action.

"King Alfred," says Augustin Thierry, "was more learned than any of his compatriots. In his youth he had travelled about *the southern countries of Europe*, and had observed the customs which prevailed there." (I italicise the causes which might have made Alfred turn aside from the Saxon habit of life, but failed to do so.) "He knew the *learned languages* and the greater part *of the writings of antiquity*. The superior knowledge which the king had acquired inspired him with a kind of disdain for the nation he ruled. He set but little store by the intelligence and prudence displayed by the great national council. Filled with the idea of absolute power, which *the literature and history of the Roman Empire* brought before his imagination, he conceived a vehement desire to make political reforms. Tradition has handed down some vague memories of the severe measures adopted by Alfred's Government; the excessive rigour with which he caused liars and false judges to be punished was talked of long after his death. *Although this rigorous policy was intended for the good of the English people, it could not have been agreeable to a nation which thought more of the life of a freeman than of regularity in public affairs.* Moreover, Alfred's severity towards the great was not accompanied by affability towards the humble." [1]

So when, seven years after his election and eight years after the first attempts of the Danes to sail up the Thames, Alfred had to repulse a fresh attack of the invaders, it was in vain that he sent his messenger through the villages and the country side carrying the arrow and the naked sword and shouting, "Let him who doth not wish to be held a man of nought leave his house and come to battle! *That oelc man the were un-nithing sceel de cuman!*" Very few men came, and Alfred found himself almost alone. This is an excellent example of the way in which the people carried on self-government independently of the Witenagemot, which had not deposed King Alfred. It decided pending questions in its own way, without having recourse to violence or political agitations, without going beyond its rights or beyond private action.

The Saxons, then, who thus remained at home, knew that they would inevitably have to submit to be taxed by the Danes, who this time, as no resistance was opposed to them, spread

[1] *La Conquête de l'Angleterre*, vol. i. bk. ii. pp. 101, 102.

all over the land to the south of the Thames, which was the Saxon's own property. The Saxons evidently preferred to pay heavy taxes rather than make for themselves a regular, national, autocratic government.

So the Danes occupied the whole of England by force of arms. It would seem as though the power of the Saxons was now exhausted, and that all was up with them. Nothing of the kind, however; for the race did not disappear, it did not change its form of society; consequently, everything remained as it was, as we shall soon see.

Alfred was aroused from his dreams of Roman and feudal forms of government by the firm decision his people had made to submit to the demands of the Danes rather than follow him. This time he set to work after the manner of the Saxons: we shall see how he succeeded.

Alone, absolutely alone, fleeing from the Danes through the forests, he realised that he must depend absolutely on himself, like the humblest of the Saxons. Assuming a new name, he went to the most distant limits of Saxon territory near Cornwall, and settled on a peninsula enclosed by marshes, where two rivers met, the Tone and the Parret. He stayed with a peasant fisherman, and had in his turn to watch the baking of the bread beneath the cinders. There he quietly gathered round him a few neighbours and friends, and began with their aid to fortify his peninsula with entrenchments and palisades. He increased his band a little, and then made sorties and began to harass the Danish outposts in the neighbourhood. After six months he thought the time had come to make known to the Saxons what he was doing: he revealed his name, and by aid of messengers appointed the Stone of Egbert, near the Great Forest, only a few miles from the principal Danish encampment, as a rendezvous. This time the Saxons rose, and in good earnest. Alfred, however, determined to go himself to observe the enemy's position: disguised as a harp-player, he amused the Danish soldiers and surveyed the camp at his leisure.

At last Wessex raised its banner.

I hope the reader will excuse my emotion at being the first spectator of the patient growth of this splendid epic of the Saxon race, for I cannot see the gallant banner of Wessex

raised for a new and still harder fight for liberty, after so many bygone efforts, without saluting it with three cheers! The attack was so deadly that Godrun, the Danish king, evacuated the whole of the Saxon territory and made an alliance with Alfred. It took place in the year 879, six months only after the invasion of Wessex.

After its rapid liberation, Wessex rested on its oars for some time. But twenty-five years later it again took the offensive, and in thirty years freed the whole of the territory of the Angles just as it had freed its own (from 905 to 934). The Danish pirates were wholly rooted out of England, and Ethelstan, King of Wessex, a descendant of Cerdic, Egbert, and Alfred, asserted once more the triumph of the Saxon race all over the island.

But we must not forget that we still have to consider the second band of Danes: the regular Danes. Fifty years after the expulsion of the pirates, the regular Danes in their turn arrived in England (991).

It must be acknowledged that the Saxon people had their work cut out for them.

Who were the regular Danes?

They were the very people who had expelled the Danish pirates from Scandinavia and taken possession of their lands, and made themselves *kings of the land* (*theod-kongs*, *filke-kongs*), while they forced the others to become sea-kings. One of these land-kings succeeded in subjecting to his authority all the large islands of Scandinavia, the south of Sweden or Scania, and Jutland: the whole kingdom was called Denmark. We saw how the Odinids, when turned out of their domains, swept down upon Europe with the outcasts of the population; we shall now see how the Odinids who remained masters of the land in their turn swept down upon Europe with the regular part of the population after having sufficiently assured their authority at home. It must be observed with what admirable precision this Odinid race follows the law of its development.

The regular Danes, who belonged to the pure Gothic type, brought something to Great Britain similar to what the Angles had brought. But they came at a later stage and followed after them—that is to say, they found the land under cultivation, and no longer in the primitive state in which the Angles

had taken it from the hands of the Britons. Further: the intercourse, such as was carried on between the Saxons and the Angles, had caused them both to make progress, and it is beyond a doubt that the Anglo-Saxon population was, taking it all round, more advanced in civilisation than even the regular Danish population. Now, when a race belonging to a patriarchal form of society like that of the Danes finds the land not only already under cultivation, but cultivated according to the most advanced methods, it does not know how to find a place for itself among the agriculturists; it can only form itself into a governing class, and live at the expense of the others. So the new Danish invasion was only a political conquest.

That explains the quite peculiar and at first sight surprising attitude which the Saxons adopted with regard to it. A few historians have understood it; the rest have hunted out a quantity of explanations which an examination of the facts has shown to be false. The Saxons at the outset simply made a covenant with the conquering Danes, who were a regular political power; like good men of business, they offered to pay the money which they would have spent in making war against them direct to the Danes, and asked them in return to live peaceably in their midst. This was the famous tax of the *Danegeld*. In this we clearly recognise those Saxons described by Tacitus, who in their easy-going way are ready to fight, "*si res poscat*, if the cause is worth the trouble," but not otherwise.

The Saxon population of England, with its small estates, must have been extraordinarily good at work: it is astounding to find that the people had produced enough to move such a host of plunderers of all kinds to covetousness, in the face of such frequent and such severe trials; and yet it is certain that the Danes secured a tremendous amount of booty among them, and that the Saxons paid them enormous sums, as if it was some economical contrivance, in order that they might be allowed to pursue their labours in peace.

After having gone off with their first *Danegeld*, the Danes made a new attempt in a second expedition. It turned out that the Saxons still thought it was better to pay, although they might have to pay more heavily. And, as there was no reason why this ransom should not be demanded again, they

thought it quicker and less costly to allow the King of Denmark to levy a direct tax upon them at certain times, and to consider him as King of England. In this simple manner it came about that the Danish royal power was substituted for the Saxon royal power in England.

But though one royal power was substituted for another, we know that one race was not substituted for another; and as the Saxon race still continued, nothing was changed after all. In accordance with the way in which we have observed it to proceed hitherto, the Saxon race watched the development of circumstances. On the death of the King of Denmark, the Saxons returned to the election of a Saxon king as if nothing had happened; and with this step they regained the political liberty of Wessex, but of Wessex only. Wessex was always to the fore! Diverse accidents caused it to adopt now a Danish and now a Saxon king. Kings, as we have already seen, were only of a very second-rate importance in its eyes!

Finally, only twenty-seven years after the Saxons had first accepted a Danish king, certain events took place, and so simply and spontaneously were they enacted that no historian has found in any part of them matter for a longer account of them than the following:

"At the death of the Danish king Hardeknut, which took place suddenly in the midst of a marriage feast, before the Danes had assembled to choose a new king, an insurrectionary army was formed under the leadership of a Saxon called Hown. Unfortunately, the patriotic deeds done by that army are now as unknown as the name of its leader is obscure." (It was another instance of the self-dependency of the Saxons.) "Godwin, a Saxon, who had risen to some importance under the government of the Danish kings, and with him his son named Harold, this time raised the standard of independence against all Danes, whether kings or claimants, chiefs or soldiers." (And mark this well:) "The Danes, finding themselves in a short space pressed back towards the north and hunted from town to town, put out to sea in their ships, and landed with diminished numbers on the shores of their ancient fatherland."[1]

It was all over. The Danish domination was completely and for ever at an end.

[1] Aug. Thierry, *La Conquête de l'Angleterre*, vol. i. bk. ii. p. 162.

It cannot now be doubted, I think, that, as I have already explained, this invasion was nothing more than a political conquest, and the conduct exhibited by the Saxon people in that severe trial cannot be too much admired, whatever the majority of historians, with their lack of clear judgment, may say to the contrary.

Again, once more, England belonged to the Saxons, from the Forth in Scotland to the Tamar in Cornwall.

But we are not yet out of the wood: the Normans are about to land in England.

CHAPTER XVII

THE TRIUMPH OF THE SAXONS OVER NORMAN FEUDALISM IN GREAT BRITAIN

WE have seen the unstable character of the Danish domination in England. But that is, after all, only the negative side of the history of the Saxons in Great Britain. The positive side of the great struggle against the Danes was the fact that it had been led and directed by the Saxon people themselves far more than by their chiefs: self-government is therein manifested in all the fulness of its power. The foregoing account brought out that point sufficiently clearly, but it is important to emphasise it at this juncture, as it will provide us with the explanation of what follows.

After the Saxon people had taken the leadership into their own hands and had passed the crisis; had accepted, rejected, and again accepted Alfred as their leader; had elected each of their kings in turn, and deposed them if they proved incapable; had accepted the tax of Danegeld and a Danish king; had discussed the succession at each change of sovereign; had repelled Hardeknut's (or Hardicanut's) successor with violence; had roused Godwin the Saxon, who ruled Wessex in the name of the Danes, to set about the liberation of the land; had finally driven out the new invaders from every part of the island—they then chose them a king, who won no small renown in the triumph he achieved: King Edward, afterwards called Edward the Confessor. He was a descendant of Cerdic, Egbert, and Alfred; but when he was obliged to withdraw to give place to a Danish king, he had fled to Normandy, whence he was recalled.

Just as the Saxon people had managed its own affairs during the struggle, so it continued to manage them after the victory. At the departure of the foreign king and the return of the national king, it took care to have the Saxon customs in all

their purity drawn up in due and authenticated form. The usages thus drawn up and confirmed by the people and their leader form what is called the *Common Law*, or the *laws of King Edward*; they are still famous in England. The Common Law was the corner-stone of English institutions: it was the solemn and formal declaration of the constitution which was the spontaneous product of the Saxon people, after it was freed from the domination of foreigners by its own guidance. Never was there a more national political monument.

To this event was due the celebrity of Edward the Confessor's reign. It was then that the Saxon people, after having suffered so many vicissitudes since their arrival in England, were at length able to observe their traditional customs, now definitely confirmed, freely and without restraint, throughout the length and breadth of Anglo-Saxon territory. It was the final completion of the work begun by Cerdic, the establishment of the Anglo-Saxon race in Great Britain.

But the Saxons were not allowed to enjoy their triumphant victory for long in peace. They were forced to again take up the gauntlet, and engage in a struggle which was more terrible than all the others. The Norman invasion was about to succeed the Danish invasion.

We shall get a fairly clear notion of the character and results of the Norman conquest if we first of all recognise that it was a perfected form of a Danish invasion.

Who were the Normans?

We have seen how the competition of the Odinids among themselves in the Scandinavian states resulted, in the first place, in the amalgamation of a group of lands to form Denmark, or the Danish kingdom. This group of lands, which had the island of Zealand, the richest land in Scandinavia, as its centre, as it still has, must have been the first to form a constitution, owing to that very richness of the soil, which is always a cause of superiority in a country. The island of Zealand promptly succeeded in annexing all the surrounding lands—that is to say, the island of Fyen, the small neighbouring islands, Scania, the south of Sweden, and Jutland. But the lands to the north, which were farther away, escaped annexation and formed separate groups.

In the Swedish part of the basin of the Baltic, north of

Scania and separated from it by the large lakes Wener and Wetter, a union was formed under the name of the kingdom of Upsala, afterwards the kingdom of Sweden. The Odinids, who in the struggle preceding the formation of this kingdom were expelled from their lands, did not find it so easy to fall back upon the "kingdom of the sea" as the Danish pirates had done. The ice which persistently blocked the gulfs of Finland and Bothnia was less favourable to piracy. The Atlantic, too, the real source of fortune of the kings of the sea, was farther off. In order to reach it, it was necessary to thread one's way through the narrow Danish waters, with every chance of a sharp fight with the regular Danish forces.

So those ejected from the kingdom of Upsala did not become *Vikings*, frequenters of harbours and roadsteads, but ordinary *Varègues*—that is to say, exiles. And they went to seek adventure in the east, since the west was barred to them. They landed on the coast opposite Upsala, carried on piracy, traded with the Fins and Slavs after a fashion, made a special alliance with the Slav republic of Novgorod, founded the first principalities, such as those of Novgorod itself and Kieff, antecedents of the Russian Empire, went as far south as Constantinople, and entered the service of the Byzantine emperors. Thus these last representatives of the Odinid invaders retraced the same road which their fathers had followed with the Goths, and returned to the east under the names of Ostrogoths and Visigoths. Thereby the circle of the radiation of the Odinids over all Europe from their centre in Scandinavia was completed.

The social constitution of the bands of Varègues was similar to that of the bands of Danish pirates, but they travelled far more by land than by sea.

So much for the history of the regions north of Danish territory in the basin of the Baltic.

In the basin of the North Sea another group had been formed, which was separated from Sweden by the enormous chain of Scandinavian mountains which terminate to the east of the great gulf of Christiania. The Odinids, accompanied by bands of emigrants, mainly Norwegians, attempted to create a few settlements in the two Norwegian plateaux, which are absolutely distinct from the coastland with its precipitous fiords, and exactly reproduce the geographical system of

Sweden—I mean the plateaux of Christiania and Trondhjem. They formed the embryo of the kingdom of Norway, which was founded in the following way:

Harald, a descendant of Odin in the twenty-sixth generation, according to Torfæus, was one of the Jarls, or petty princes, who ruled the lands of the Norwegian plateaux in the ninth century. He was only ten years old when he lost his father, Halfdan the Black. The neighbouring Jarls, according to their usual method of procedure, invaded the territory of the young heir. But Harald, with the aid of his uncle Guthorm, got the better of his enemies. After numerous fights, in which he had the advantage, he realised that it might be within his power to bring all the flat lands of Norway under his authority, and he made a vow to leave his hair unkempt until he should have brought his enterprise to a successful termination: a vow which reminds us of the Old Germany of Tacitus.[1] He did not achieve his purpose without difficulty, for he had to fight with tough adversaries. At last, after ten years, the naval battle of Hafursfiord freed him from his vow. He was no longer Harald *Lufa*—that is to say, "of the unkempt locks"—but Harald *Haarfager*—that is to say, "of the beautiful hair"—a name which Rognvald, his most faithful friend, gave him after the victory. This Rognvald, by the way, was the father of Rolf or Rollo, whom we shall find at the head of the Normans.

It will be observed that Harald triumphed over his neighbouring rivals and became King of Norway through his success in a naval battle. It is clear that the art of navigation among the Odinids in Norway must have developed far more than in Denmark. The Arctic Ocean and the North Sea submitted them to a course of training far superior to that of the Baltic and its dependencies. The Jarls, or petty princes, who were debarred from the countries afterwards known as Trondhjem and Opslo or Christiania, took to the sea wonderfully. But Harald defended his coastline vigorously, and the new Vikings were obliged to seek a refuge in the remote and unhospitable islands of the Orcades and Hebrides, or even in Iceland. England would have suited them better, to be sure, but it was then paying tribute to the Danes.

Now it happened that Rolf or Rollo, son of Rognvald,

[1] Cf. *Germania*, xxxi.

Harald's great friend—counting, of course, on the special affection the King of Norway had for his father—made up his mind to make a *strandhug*, or raid, with his comrades upon the Norwegian coast on his way back from an expedition in the Baltic. Harald summoned a *thing*, a council, which condemned the offender to exile. It was in vain that Hillda, Rolf's mother, asked for pardon for her son, and represented to the king that he might easily return from exile with a more formidable band; Harald was inflexible. Rolf launched his ships and sailed for the Hebrides.[1]

He stirred up all the Odinids and their followers whom he met in the retreats of the Hebrides. His rank, his daring, and his enormous stature soon caused him to be chosen as the chief of the whole band. He was called *Gang-Rolf*—that is to say, Rolf the Walker—because he was so tall that he could not find among the small kinds of horses of the north, like those of Shetland, a single horse capable of bearing him, and so he always went on foot.

With this band of recruits from the Hebrides as his following, he went on board again, rounded the north of Scotland and sailed towards the Escaut. He probably met with a bad welcome there, for he immediately looked out for a better field of adventure farther south in Neustria: he entered the mouth of the Seine.

The rest of his story is sufficiently well known. It culminated in the treaty of St.-Clair-sur-Epte in 911, and in the foundation of the so-called duchy of Normandy. What special name was it possible to give to this confused medley of men from the north? They were named *Northmen*, Normans.

When Rolf was uncontested master of Rouen, of the country of Caux, of Lieuvin (Lisieux), and of Bessin (Bayeux), which he had laid waste, he invited people to come and live there, promising to guard them with a good police force as Harald had done. Thereupon the coast of Old Neustria became repeopled with every kind of person attracted thither from Norway, from the Saxon plain, and from Frankish territory. Thus was formed that characteristic Norman population, led, as we see, by Odinids, but recruited from peasants from the northern countries I have just mentioned, which, generally

[1] See *Haralds Saga, Snorro*, c. 1, 2, 19, 20, 23, 24.

speaking, belonged to the particularist type of society. Nevertheless, the remains of the Gallo-Roman or Gothic race, which still existed in a part of this region, mingled with the new population. The Normandy of the interior, which was ceded in a more friendly manner to the invaders and was less ravaged by them, still preserves its Gallo-Roman character most unmistakably, as may be seen by the way in which the population there is clustered together in large villages, in striking contrast to the population living nearer the sea.

From the point of view of their constitution, then, the Normans present a rather different aspect from that which is generally pictured.

The Normans who won renown by their warlike exploits were pure Odinids. They represented in its most complete form that race, which, devoted as it was to warfare, had been forced to vent its energies upon itself for a time when it was confined in the Scandinavian states after the general occupation of Europe by the barbarians, and then spent all that was left in a last distant expedition, more exclusively Odinid than all the rest—the invasion of the Danish Vikings, of the Swedish Varègues, and of the Norwegian Vikings, called Normans.

These Norwegian Vikings were in no sense seacoast fishermen. They were Odinids who had passed from the land of the Goths to the plateaux of Norway and preserved their Odinid manner of life, fighting one another, and trying to live cleverly on the seacoast fishermen of the less precipitous and less solitary fiords, as they had formerly succeeded in living on the Gothic peasant, without setting him against them or destroying him. It was not till they were driven from the land by their peers that these Norwegian Odinids became Vikings; and if they happened to be more daring sailors than the rest, it was because they had to serve an apprenticeship with a rougher sea.

The Norman warrior chief was probably the highest production of the Odinid form of society. He was a man of colossal strength, whose education, both physical and mental, had tended to make him an army in himself. Owing to the fear which his personal strength inspired, the renown which it brought him, and the dauntless character it engendered, he was quite prepared to take the lead over young blades of the same stamp. That was enough to form the basis of an organisation. The interest,

the constant amusement of this man was to establish order by his arbitrary will in everything he was able to bring under his power. If that order annoyed him personally, he would violate it, arbitrarily likewise, but would not suffer anyone else to do so. That sort of discipline was the guarantee of his life and authority. If perchance he found that he lost his power over his following, he employed manœuvres, caressed, heaped his men with favours and booty, used cunning; but as soon as he saw that the moment had come when he was again the strongest, he withdrew everything, was pitiless, and made terrible examples. He was too much of a warrior ever to have learned agriculture; but there were two ways in which he procured for himself the produce of the earth. If he merely wanted provisions on a journey, he would make a raid, and carry off the crops as if it were a game; and he carried the game so far as to kill the peasant after he had robbed him—a most useless deed; and what was left after the pillage, he burned and laid waste. If he wanted a regular and permanent supply of produce, he protected the peasant—a practice from which he derived the most benefit by treating the peasant well; he used it cleverly, with moderation and prudence.

So much, then, for the internal working of the government of a chief of a Norman band.

Situated as that personage was, we cannot hesitate to suppose that he at once recognised a convenient instrument, and one of just the kind he wanted, in the feudal system, which he found in full vigour on Frankish soil when he settled there. The points in it which were best suited to his purpose were as follows: in the vassal system there was a regular and permanent method of organising a military force, with a certain regard for independence, the right of discussion and personal pride, because in no case was a man infeoffed to the suzerain by his person, but by his estate; in the organisation of the serfs or tenant cultivators, which rendered the agricultural class hard-working, prosperous, and productive, was a simple and all-powerful organisation which worked smoothly and satisfactorily. Rolf grasped it so thoroughly that he made no difficulty about changing his title of king for that of duke in order to enter into the feudal system, and consented, with the exception of the kissing of the foot, to pay homage as a vassal

to Charles the Simple, his crushed and powerless adversary, but for all that the chief of Frankish feudalism.

And, for the very reason that feudalism provided those two very convenient systems of military organisation and land cultivation—which latter the Normans used to carry on so laboriously in Scandinavia, because they used the decadent patriarchal and communal methods—for that very reason the settlement of the new-comers met with unexampled success. They had, moreover, this advantage over those who had been longer established in feudalism: namely, that they made a general settlement over a whole country at one stroke. That gave feudalism in Normandy a more regular organisation than that of any other country, and caused it later on to be considered by authorities on feudalism as the normal type of the system, whereas it was really an exception on account of its very regularity.

But these improvised feudal lords were not smitten with a love of agronomy all of a sudden. They preferred to have the harvests all ready reaped than to make use of forced labour. That is the reason why the peasants in Normandy were emancipated sooner than elsewhere—that is to say, why dues were substituted for forced labour—as we have already seen.[1]

Military expeditions continued to be the chief interest of the Norman lords. So it is not astonishing to find that they are almost the only lords to answer the summons of the first Capetian kings who tried to meddle in the affairs of their great vassals and to make war outside the domains directly dependent on the crown. The Normans formed a good garrison, from which plenty of soldiers could be drawn. There is no other plausible explanation of that quite peculiar alliance which was regularly maintained between the dukes of Normandy and the founders of the third race of kings.

When the kings of France did not need their services, the Normans found means of occupying themselves; but they did not remain in Normandy precisely to enjoy the pleasures of country life: they extended the frontiers of Normandy by warfare; they annexed, or tried to annex, Maine, Brittany, Anjou, Poitou. And yet the Normans thus occupied were the more sedentary, for the others went up and down Spain, to

[1] See above, Chap. XII p. 206.

Italy, Sicily, Greece, and Syria, to perform their feats of arms. They thus, by a circuitous sea-passage, themselves being sons of Vikings, rejoined their brothers the Varègues, Odinids of the same stock, who had gone eastwards by the Continent.

But neither Vikings nor Varègues succeeded in perpetuating their race for very long, nor in developing it by a natural process of expansion in any of the numerous countries which they paralysed by their exploits. The fact is that, after all, they really remained Odinids, warrior chiefs, as we have just seen. The Normans disappeared from every place except Normandy.

But how was it that Normandy was the exception ?

Because other Northmen besides themselves came with them to Normandy.

These others were not Odinids, and did not feel inclined to go round the world. They went to the nearest shores, and landed as quickly as possible, never to stir from the spot again. Most of them simply came from the neighbouring Frankish lands, and they owed their name of Norman to the fact that they were under Norman domination. Their language, the vulgar tongue of the Land of Caux, which was never Scandinavian, but French, is evidence of their French origin; and, as proof, the true Normans, those I mentioned just now, were obliged to learn French against their will, and to forget Scandinavian.

The Norman peasants and farmers who were merely Franks and Gallo-Romans had the same advantage as their masters the Norman warriors and vassals: namely, that they settled afresh in a devastated land, where everything was organised at one stroke. That explains how it was that they were so well distributed over the land, according to the method of the feudal system and according to the custom which the Vikings had seen practised in Norway by their seacoast fishermen. From that point of view, too, it was a favourable opportunity for the creation of what authorities on feudalism call a normal type. The country had been completely devastated: we know how everyone fled to Paris on the appearance of the Normans, and contemporary accounts say that not even the barking of a dog could be heard in the vast solitudes of the Norman lands.

As well as Franks and Gallo-Romans, there came to Normandy some Saxon and Norwegian peasants. These, for the

most part, attracted by the desire to hear their own tongue, settled near an ancient Saxon colony, of but slight importance, which was established in the Pays Bessin (land of Bayeux), a kind of small Saxon plain at the base of the gulf formed by Calvados and Manche. It was called Lower Normandy. Saxon or Scandinavian continued to be spoken there for a long time. The first dukes of Normandy sent their infant sons there to learn the language of their fathers. But the people there, like those of the Saxon plain, were but little disposed to tolerate the Odinids, and were very rebellious at the domination of the dukes of Normandy; they made very little response to their summons to attend meetings, and almost always resisted their government.

The descendants of that agricultural population, which was half Frankish, half true Norman, formed that Norman race which became stable and practical when it ceased to be heroic. Those who rose to eminence from that inferior position very soon took the place of the Odinids, who were not long in disappearing. The dukes of Normandy did not hang back. Their family was represented by legitimate descendants for one hundred and twenty-three years, and William the Bastard replaced all the members of his family on the father's side, on the ducal side, by the members of the family of his mother, the washerwoman, the daughter of the tanner of Falaise. And this duchy of Normandy, which had been the protector of the Capetians, was the first fief to be confiscated by them. But the Norman agricultural population constituted that "land of wisdom" (a name given to Normandy), which alone perpetuated the name of Normans in the world, quite apart from the traditions of the famous Norman warriors.

All that we have said of the Normans as to their devotion to warlike enterprises applies directly to their conquest of England: it was one of their military adventures, one of the results of the need they felt for fighting and for leading an active life. I will pass over the circumstantial particulars, which merely form the history of the diplomacy used on that occasion. To explain the conquest of England by the opportunities used, or rather made, by William the Conqueror, is to explain the new German Empire by the candidature of the Prince of Hohenzollern for the throne of Spain. The Normans conquered England just as they conquered at the same time

Maine, Brittany, Anjou, Poitou, Italy, and Spain; and they lost England just as they lost the rest.

William had seen Great Britain governed, or rather exploited, by the Danish kings. On their disappearance, he thought that he could do the same thing, only better. The absence of any descendant of Edward the Confessor was a fact of little significance, seeing that Saxon royalty was elective in England, and that, moreover, there were still some descendants of Cerdic left. But, as a matter of fact, the Saxons elected Harold, who seemed to them to promise to be a beter king than any of the descendants of Cerdic. He was the son of that same Godwin who had done such good service in the expulsion of the Danes, begun by Hown. But when William had shown his military superiority at Hastings, and Harold had been killed in the battle, it did not seem at all improbable that the Saxons would in practice accept a Norman king as they had accepted a Danish king. In short, that was what immediately happened, but it took place tacitly, and rather by a process of laisser-faire than by a formal decision of the Saxon people. Nevertheless, the deed was done. William was able to get himself crowned, though in a somewhat tumultuous manner, at London, directly after the Battle of Hastings.

William did not bring in his train a colony of agriculturists, but a band of soldiers picked up at random and composed largely of very inferior men. But the band was formed in accordance with the feudal system of military service. Each man claimed the right of being provided with a fief, but was far from pretending to cultivate it with his own hands. Thus the system by which England was occupied consisted in granting feudal rights to the conquerors—that is, the right of collecting dues from lands which the Saxons, formerly free-holders, then held as rent-payers. Apart from the feudal rent, the new lords claimed the right of commanding forced labour at will. In short, the Saxon remained a farmer, but was no longer considered a landowner; he was liable to taxation, and to any amount of forced labour the lord chose to exact. His lands were even supposed not to pass to his descendants except at the good pleasure of the feudal lord. These, then, were the legal institutions, and, more especially, the covetous claims of that mixed body of Normans, or so-called Normans.

But the Saxon people, as individuals, opposed this outrageous exploitation with all their might, claimed the right of keeping their property for their descendants, and of paying only what they could reasonably pay, and getting compensation for the forced labour they contributed. When they had reduced feudal taxation in this manner, they further claimed the right of regulating their national affairs according to the old national customs, and even of administering justice impartially, in accordance with their custom, to those against whom the Normans brought accusations. That was the way in which they understood the conquest.

It was neither more nor less than an open conflict.

It took two forms: that of resistance made by individuals by every possible means, including armed resistance and sometimes assassination; and that of general resistance by public risings, which took place in the twinkling of an eye, and of resistance authorised by charters obtained from the Norman kings, which were almost immediately violated by them.

Owing to this permanent state of conflict, the Normans were kept in the position of strangers in England, and were cut off from all ordinary intercourse with the Saxons. They remained armed from top to toe, only venturing out with precaution, and shut themselves up in castles which they had built to secure their persons against the attempts of the people. Thence it came about that they preserved their language, and the Saxons theirs. And the two peoples lived side by side, instead of intermingling freely.

It was imperative for the Normans to remain united in this state of siege. The feudal system provided them with a ready-made organisation for that purpose. So the Saxons were wont to say that the Normans kept as close together "as the scales of a tortoise." The superiority of the Normans over the Danes consisted in their employment of the feudal military organisation which they had borrowed from France before they attacked England. And that is why I said that the Norman conquest was only a perfected form of the Danish invasion. All the points we have just enumerated make this clear.

The vital necessity of maintaining a strict feudal union between the Normans constituted the power of the Norman king, who, in England, kept his vassals in hand like no other

suzerain in the world. He was, in fact, a potentate. He treated his English vassals in a way which his continental vassals would not have stood for a moment.

As long as the Norman king was prudent enough only to attack such and such vassals one by one, when he wanted to manage them, matters went smoothly. He was supported by the rest, by the majority of the vassals, to whom he of course distributed the spoils of those he got rid of. But when the bad government, which was the necessary result, in the long-run, of the spirit of adventure of the Norman sovereigns, forced them to attempt, rash though it was, to bring pressure to bear upon all the nobility at once, in order to extort exorbitant tribute from them under every form, then the entire nobility realised the king's tyranny at the same moment, was no longer divided against itself, and spontaneously leagued itself against a completely deserted king.

But the nobles would have been able to effect nothing towards their emancipation from the royal tyranny, if the Saxon population, which surrounded them and swamped them, so to speak, on every side throughout the length and breadth of the kingdom, had been set against them while they were rising against the sovereign. There was only one step possible for the Norman lords: consequently they took it with one accord. They openly and radically changed their position, and, to a man, went over to the side of the Saxon people. They made the king sign a charter in which they demanded that the *Common Law*, the laws of good King Edward, should be recognised as well as the independence of the nobles and their guarantees against the king. That was the famous Magna Carta.

To all appearance, the Normans were beginning to take the Saxon people under their protection. In reality, the Normans were rallying to the Saxon people, even seeking their strength to supply their own weakness, and were organising their defence with their aid.

Thus the Saxon people remained the stronger: it had won the day.

The Normans established a system by which they might lawfully protect themselves against the king's power: they instituted a council of twenty-five lords, and assemblies of nobles and ecclesiastics to which the Saxons were allowed to

send representatives, but only when the question of subsidies was being discussed. That was the beginning of the parliament.

But the Saxons placed but little reliance upon this system, in which they had no part. On each occasion they demanded anew the practical or theoretical recognition of the laws of King Edward—that is to say, of the absolute security of the estate against being seized in payment of taxes and alleged debts, of the inviolability of persons, and of the local administration of justice by non-officials, all of which, when drawn up in due form, practically represented the whole of the English constitution, everything essential to the Anglo-Saxon type, everything which formed the basis of its strength.

Every time the people had to make serious complaints about these points, they rose *en masse*, peaceably, and without giving way to violence under any provocation, and did not return home until they had obtained a promise that their customs would be respected. Tacitus' type of Saxon seems to reappear before us, almost feature for feature, in this people which masters its anger when irritated, and does not resort to blows when it is roused, even when it is armed and is the stronger.

In sheltering themselves behind this method of procedure on the part of the Saxon people, the Norman nobles put their necks beneath its yoke. The people behaved towards the nobles in the same way as it had always behaved towards national leaders : it allowed them to manage affairs so long as it saw some good in their management, or, at any rate, not too much harm. It withdrew its support, and devised means of bringing things to a crisis, when necessity demanded it.

Thus, a little more than a century and a half after the beginning of that formidable feudal domination, the Saxon people had regained their position and re-established self-government under the old form which they had naturally and spontaneously created. They were again in their former condition. They had absorbed the relatively small number of influential Norman nobles. Saxons, Angles, and Normans were really all Saxons, and no longer recognised anything but the Saxon language, the Common Law, the laws of good King Edward. We shall presently examine this in detail, and follow the sequence of facts relating to it.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE COMMUNAL MOVEMENT IN FRANCE

UP to this point in our history of the particularist races we have found that the means of living have been supplied by only two forms of labour: seacoast fishing, with an elementary kind of agriculture on the Norwegian coast; and an improved kind of agriculture, although the methods used are simple, in the territory of the Saxons, Franks, and Anglo-Saxons.

Now, we know that the natural result of the development of agriculture is to bring about the development of manufacture after a certain time.

Accordingly, we shall find that in the lands where improved methods of agriculture are used, the particularists come into contact with industrial work, which goes on side by side with that of agriculture.

In the first period of its development, a period which is prolonged into modern times, manufacture, among particularist peoples as well as among others, is carried on in the small workshop, where the artisan works alone or with a small number of helpers. The next point, then, that we are going to investigate in the course of our history is the development of *the particularist form of society in the period when industry was in the ascendant, but was restricted to the small workshop.*

This point brings us back to the Franks.

We left them at the moment when the emancipation of the serfs, after the complete triumph of feudalism over the Merovingians, attested and still further promoted the increase of the agricultural wealth of estates organised on the Frankish system. The fact that it was at that very time that an *industrial population* appeared in France, according to the evidence of history, is what we should expect, but it is full of interest.

By an industrial population we mean a population which finds that it can make enough profit by manufacture to practise it exclusively, or almost exclusively, as its means of livelihood. The appearance of a population of this kind is the clearest proof of the existence of causes which tend to the increase of manufacture. So far as we have seen, manufacture in France was kept, like everything else, shut up within the estate. The ordinary "peasants" manufactured for the domain and in the domain everything necessary for it: they combined manufacture with agriculture. But in the twelfth century increasing aggregations of people were formed, who devoted themselves exclusively to manufacture, and became completely separated from the domain. This is known in history under the striking name of the *Communal Movement*.

There is nothing astonishing in the fact that, of all the particularist peoples, the Franks were the first to start this movement. It was with them that high farming on the large estate had developed most, — and we have already given the reasons why,—consequently, it was with them that manufacture necessarily made its first start.[1]

The society of the Franks was based so exclusively on the rural domain that historians are very much exercised to know what became of the towns when the triumph of feudalism was at its height. However, we shall try to give some account of them.

Before the arrival of the Franks in Gaul, the majority of the towns of a certain importance had been placed by the Roman emperors of the decadence under the management of the Curia, that ill-starred institution. They were called *municipes*.

To all appearance, they were modelled after the system of the internal government of Ancient Rome. The civic landed proprietors were called patricians: to have a right to that title it was enough to possess 25 jugera (720,000 square feet) of land in the territory which was dependent on the city and stretched for some distance round it. This class governed the rest of the inhabitants, who figured as plebeians. This patrician government—modest, to be sure, but boasting, nevertheless, a

[1] Among others, see above, Chap. VIII. pp. 133, 144; Chap. IX. p. 149.

fair number of large, and even very large landowners—was called the *Curia*. Those who formed part of it were called *curials*.

A great council, attended by large numbers, was formed from among them: the Council of the *Decurions*. It was to the curials what the Senate was to the patricians.

Lastly, the executive was intrusted to a few members of this council, usually two, who bore the name of *duumvirs*, and played the part of consuls.

That is, roughly, the system of government.

Such it was to all appearance, at least. But we must see what it was in reality.

The great duty of this administration was not so much to govern in the interests of the municipality as to collect the taxes for the emperor. And—mark this well—the curials, all and each, had to answer with their private fortunes for the payment of the full amount of the tax to be contributed by the town and its territory. It is easy to see that the chief desire of the curials was to get rid of their office, since, owing to hard times, the difficulties they experienced more than counterbalanced the honours that were attached to their position. But you may rest well assured that they were forbidden to do so. The imperial decrees bound them to the Curia as they bound the Roman cultivators to the grants of land—in the one case to be answerable for the taxes, in the other to pay them.[1] When the central power in a society has exhausted and withered everything, it still believes that the evil can be remedied by making obligatory what can no longer go on of itself. The unfortunate curials were so anxious to free themselves from this kind of torture, that they decided to flee and abandon their property. They were no more allowed to do that than were the cultivators; they were brought back, and were made to pay a fine in addition. They conceived the idea of enlisting in the army or of entering the Church, because the soldier and the churchman were exempted from the duties of curial. Again they were forbidden.

The only mark of pity shown by the emperors to the *municipes*—that is, to the curials who were responsible for them—was that they granted them the power of choosing a *defender*,

[1] See above, Chap. VIII. pp. 136, 137.

who was officially permitted to appeal directly to the imperial power against the excessively rigorous action employed by the prætor or any other provincial governor in pursuing the curials for the payment of the tax. The curials usually chose the bishop of the place for this difficult post: the bishoprics were, of course, established in the chief Roman towns.

The municipal duties intrusted to the inhabitants possessing more than twenty-five jugera of land are sufficient evidence that the towns were, above all, places inhabited by rural landowners. Besides, we have already seen that under the Roman and Gallo-Roman system of government the owners of estates usually lived in the towns.[1] In towns which were not naturally convenient for commerce, owing to their peculiar situation, there were very few merchants, and even very few manufacturers. The reason was that the landowners, the principal inhabitants, with their following of dependents, relied for their living upon the estates which they possessed in the outskirts of the town. The troops of slaves whom they maintained on their lands furnished them not only with the produce of agriculture, but with manufactured articles which a portion of the slaves made in country workshops, where they were organised, directed, supervised, and goaded on by the representative of the master. The overplus of the manufacture was sold for the landowners' profit by intermediaries, who on occasion concealed his name in order that he might have the greater honour of being thought a man of liberal means. More than one country could be quoted at the present day—Corsica, for example—where the rural landowners live in a similar way in town on the produce of their estates, and are more or less openly the chief traders.

Nevertheless, in those Roman *municipes* which were the best situated for commerce there was a considerable population of merchants and professional manufacturers. There were some even who formed unions. These people were not owners of landed property, but for all that they were not free from taxation: their profession was taxed. This kind of taxation was called *Chrysargyre*—that is to say, "gold and silver"—because it was not collected in the form of merchandise, but in the form of money from the merchant's till. It was the obvious thing to make those persons who were liable to the

[1] See above, Chap. VIII. p. 134.

tax responsible for each other before the Treasury, just as had been done in the case of the owners of landed property. Pressure was put upon them to form trade corporations, so that the people of the same trade should be responsible for each other for the whole tax levied on the trade. And, what is more, the corporations were made conjointly liable, and had to make up each other's deficits. History relates that some wretched individuals were obliged to sell their children in order to pay this so-called *Chrysargyre*.

In short, the *municipes* of the period before the invasion of the barbarians were made up of an obligatory corporation of landed proprietors and of enforced and conjointly liable corporations of people engaged in commerce and in trade. And the object of these obligatory corporations was to make the members of them responsible for each other for the payment of the taxes.

Such was the organisation of the *Gallo-Roman towns of the decadence*.

One can imagine the sigh of relief which escaped from these gehennas when the barbarians arrived and put the representatives of the emperor to flight before them.

In Gaul, the Merovingian invaders, who were at first more occupied in pursuing their conquest than in organising it, gave no thought to the administration of the towns, but merely wanted to extort from them a ransom, or, if they resisted, to plunder them. During this period of invasion, the towns, abandoned to their own resources, directed their affairs as best they could. They were usually managed by the *defender*, ordinarily the bishop, as I said before, who, because of the confidence he enjoyed, was chosen for that position by the public, and even by popular election. Time after time we read of the bishop acting as intermediary between the town and the barbarians. It was not of much importance whether he was given the title of *defender* or not: under such critical circumstances that duty belonged to the most capable as well as to the most popular man. The person thus designated by force of circumstances was surrounded by the old curials, now freed from their legal servitude by the retreat of the Roman administration, but summoned by necessity and common consent to perform the duties of magistrates, to judge disputes

or crimes, or to busy themselves in matters of public interest. It was, in short, a government *de facto* in the hands of men who were naturally fitted to wield authority, and, above all, it was carried on in a friendly manner.

Something of the same sort occurred thirty years ago in France in the first days of the German occupation, when the representatives of the central power had withdrawn and the German officials had not yet been able to take their place. The local government which springs up spontaneously in such cases makes use of earlier customs and traditional forms, but it adapts them freely to the circumstances.

Such was the organisation of the *Gallo-Roman towns during the invasion.*

After the invasion, when order was re-established, the Franks for the most part settled on estates, where they organised the population in their peculiar manner, as we already know, where they permanently resided, and tried to make themselves independent of public authorities. They thus kept very much aloof from the towns. The towns were left to the Merovingians, who placed men of their *truste* in them as annually appointed functionaries. Their custom was to send a person of high rank, a member of their suite bearing the title of count, which was Germanic as much as Roman, to the principal town in a "country"—that is to say, in a small district—and to allow him to choose the subordinates who were to go to the secondary towns in the neighbourhood. But it was no duty of the count to reorganise or replace either by his own person or that of his agents the municipal administration which we have just seen groping its way forward in the chaos of the invasion. He was simply charged to collect the old imperial taxes for the Merovingians. If it is true that he performed other duties as well, they were those in which the central authority was interested, such as the enrolment of troops, the absolute maintenance of public peace, the duty of presiding at, of procuring someone to preside at, or of sanctioning the trial of criminals. He did not serve the city but the Merovingian.

Taxes were, at that time, levied on each tax-payer, who was only responsible for himself personally and not for anyone else. The tax-collecting was supervised by the count, and no longer by the urban administration. But the count sometimes appealed

to usurers, who advanced a round sum to cover the taxes, and exercised the privilege of procuring the money to refund themselves from the individual tax-payers. The taxes of each individual were assessed according to the last list drawn up under the empire.

We are here talking of the land tax, which it was formerly the duty of the curials to collect, and for which they were conjointly responsible. As for the *Chrysargyre*, it had disappeared in the confusion, together with all regular commerce and manufacture. Commerce was no more than an enterprise of bold adventurers, and manufacture was more than ever restricted to the domains.

Such was the condition of the *Merovingian towns*.

The towns of Southern Gaul remained almost exactly in that condition. The feudal organisation, which was Frankish and not Merovingian, only penetrated a little way into that region. The Franks did not travel as quickly as the Merovingians, and they spread mainly towards the north. The Gallo-Roman landowners of the south, both large and small, continued to live in the towns for the greater part of the year, and so kept up their importance. The count was allowed to collect the taxes on their estates without very much resistance, on condition that he assessed them according to the ancient imperial list; if not, there were revolts and bloody quarrels between himself and the population. As the central power—which was established in the north, at Paris, Soissons, Metz, Orleans—was a long way off, the count kept the money for himself under the pretext that the expenses of his administration absorbed the receipts. There were no Frankish or Francicised landowners in the country who could rival his authority. So he lived more or less contentedly, and the inhabitants kept fairly quiet so long as their taxes were not increased: in fact, the Merovingians, whom the Frankish colonists had not followed into the south, did not introduce new ways of getting rich into that country.

Thus it came about that in Southern France the Merovingian urban organisation still went on, and the towns did not break with the tradition of the imperial government, except in the case of the modifications we mentioned just now, which were, however, of considerable importance.

In the north it was a different thing.

There the inhabitants of the town, the landed proprietors, found means of escaping the taxation and the arbitrary power of the count by fictitiously ceding their property to some powerful Frankish landowner who was established in the country, and was provided with immunities, and who made the property over to them again under the title of fief. They left the town and settled near their protector, and, like him, began to live on their own estates, which were thus, so to speak, deprived of their mark of ownership. The towns became empty, and nothing was left to be taxed by the count except town property, which was singularly neglected, and went from bad to worse. That was the end of towns in the north. They were reduced to their lowest terms, so much so that the counts themselves were obliged to live upon the revenues of some estate which had been confiscated by one of the Merovingians.

The anti-urban revolution introduced by the Franks was accomplished.

The inhabitants who lingered on in the towns were of too slight importance, and too few, to carry on any sort of municipal administration themselves, to maintain any government or any kind of organisation for public purposes, such as the settlement of disputes, which are sure to spring up in every aggregation of men. The count, as we have said, was not supposed to undertake these matters, but he found he was the only person to do it. He could manage everything to his own liking.

Charlemagne, however, attempted to introduce some kind of order into affairs. He decreed that his *missi dominici* should come to an agreement with the count and the inhabitants as to the choice of those to whom the political administration and the petty trials in the town should be intrusted. The municipal magistrates appointed by this triple council were called *Scabini*, from the Saxon word *scapene*, which means to command and to judge. Thence came the word *échevin* (sheriff).

Such was the organisation of the *Carlovingian towns*.

We can see how it was that this system did not last long, but disappeared with Charlemagne and his *missi dominici*. The count soon found he was left to manage affairs alone with the townspeople. He sent them sheriffs of his own choosing, who were simply his representatives. He placed the inhabitants

of the town on the same footing as those on the estates with which the king had endowed him, and upon which he lived since the immunities of the Frankish landowners had reduced the taxes to nothing. He placed the last remaining inhabitants of the town on a par with the people on his lands; he considered them as his men, he made them contribute forced labour or pay rent for their property in the town, forbade them to leave it without his consent, to assign it without paying him some dues, to marry without his authorisation—in a word, he established and exercised over them the private and public rights of a Frankish lord: he made them into serfs pure and simple.

The ecclesiastics, however, who formed a certain part of the urban population, and the vassals and knights who happened to have a house in town—a very rare occurrence—and who sometimes came to live there, needless to say, escaped this transformation. In the town as well as outside it they preserved the immunities belonging to their rank. So they paid no dues and were subject to none of the obligations I have just mentioned which usually accompanied the possession of any property in a town.

Those who paid dues and were subject to the obligations were generally called *bourgeois*. They were none the less exactly like villeins or hinds, whose name they were occasionally given. They were serfs.

At the same time as these towns were decaying others were being created, but they were organised on exactly the same model. They were, for example, aggregations of houses, which appeared round some abbey that had become a haunt of pilgrims, and consequently a market-place.

Some of the lords, both ecclesiastics and laymen, at this time conceived the idea of peopling certain parts of their estates, which they found some difficulty in filling, by granting anyone who would come and live there exemption from the tasks or obligations of serfdom. Such an attraction brought a goodly number of people. The new settlements were called *villes neuves* (new towns)—that is to say, villas or villages. But some of them developed and became real towns. Some have lasted till modern times, and still bear their ancient name of *Villeneuve*. The point to be noted is that, at the start, they

differed from the decadent towns, not in their method of administration but in being exempted from servile labour.

In short, the towns were at that time completely subject to the feudal system. They did not escape from it in spite of the fact that the count, or the ordinary lord, had to appoint a few officials to preserve order in the midst of their increasing throng of inhabitants. These officials were under the feudal system, held their posts in fief, with hereditary and transferable rights, subject to the agreement of the lord. They continued, however, to be called *sheriffs*, but they were also given the more thoroughly feudal name of *peers*. They had charge of the municipal administration, the ordinary urban courts of law, and certain matters of common interest to the townsfolk. The fees or "benefits" which they received in payment of the discharge of the duties of their fiefs were deducted from the fines they collected as guardians of the public peace or as judges, and from the taxes paid by the people towards the objects of public interest with which they were concerned.

Such was the organisation of the *feudal towns*.

And here we must observe the appearance of a curious and very significant phenomenon. It confirms the law we deduced from that sequence of facts connected with the development of the particularist form of society which we have been following so closely. The phenomenon is this: the extraordinary difference there is between the *domain* and the *small workshop* from the point of view of emancipation.

On the domain the serfs were emancipated in proportion as their labour increased the produce of their holding: when they grew rich they redeemed themselves from forced labour. The rent they paid in the place of forced labour remained invariably the same when once accepted. Their lands, however, continued to improve; the produce increased in value. After a certain time, cultivation had brought everything into such good bearing that a holding could be divided into four, could lodge and feed four families instead of one. The fourth part, the peasant's quarter, *quart de paysan*, as it was called, was equivalent to the whole of the original plot, to the entire *paysan*, and the four new holdings paid between them only the same amount of rent as the original plot paid.

So the domain, from the moment of its redemption from forced labour, steadily became an increasing source of strength to the liberated family, which was not encumbered by any new burdens.

But let us pass from the domain to the town and the small urban workshop.

In the feudal town, which was scarcely more than a market-town, the bourgeois did not grow rich by agriculture. For a long time he could find no means at all of growing rich. But when wealth increased in the country, in the way I have just mentioned, there was an opportunity for commerce and for driving a lucrative trade: commerce and industry became sufficiently remunerative professions to enable people to pursue them exclusively. The country towns, whether they were situated in the old or in the new centres, to which people flocked, either near a church or an abbey or at cross-roads, were good places for a merchant or an artisan to set up a business. The number of inhabitants increased, and trade and industry became sources of wealth.

Those of the townsfolk who prospered, redeemed themselves, as the serfs had done, from the duties and obligations of their own serfdom upon payment of a fixed rent or a single sum of money. They were called *Francs-Bourgeois*, free burgesses, after their liberation.

But, as a rule, when once they had made their modest fortunes, they retired from business, from the small commercial undertakings such as were alone practicable in those days, but which formed a very engrossing occupation; they retired from industry, which was carried on on such a small scale at that period that the manufacturer was no more than a plain workman. They then had leisure to enjoy rest and independence; that was all. They did not increase their prosperity in any way: they remained as they were. They belonged to that type of small "retired" tradespeople which is a sure sign of a society rapidly tending to decadence. New artisans, new manufacturers, subject to the feudal duties and obligations, stepped into the places left vacant by those who had freed themselves from serfdom and retired from business. And when the new-comers in their turn had succeeded in freeing themselves and had retired, others entered the business in

their place, but were always liable to the restraints of serfdom. Thus trade did not achieve its liberty like the land.

And the trades, when abandoned by free burgesses, were not merely taken up again and again by people in a servile condition, but were taxed more and more heavily by the lord in proportion as the profits increased: it was a very different thing from the fixed ground rent, and did not at all favour the rapid improvement of the urban population. The rates were levied on the sale and circulation of merchandise; they were proportioned to the amount of business done.

The rates on the sale were paid for the right of displaying goods in the market-place and getting them weighed or measured, an operation over which the lord presided. The merchant was not even allowed to sell anything in his own house without paying the dues, which were more or less heavy, and proportional to the total amount of his business. And, what is more, he could not sell anything in his own house over a certain weight, or over a certain quantity or measure, without using the lord's scales, *mine* (an old measure of capacity) or ell.[1]

The rates on the circulation of merchandise consisted in tolls, which were increased to a tremendous extent. "The lords, in their quality of landowners and leaders of the state, maintained the roads, bridges, and ferries; they saw to the protection of the roads and of navigation. In order to compensate themselves for the cost of the maintenance and protection of the roads, they appropriated the old royal tolls of which they had been the administrators (when they were counts or beneficiaries) before they became their owners; they established new dues, which they farmed out or collected directly; tolls on the bridges (*pontenage*) and on the rivers; highway tolls (*cauciage*), tolls on carts (*rouage*), tolls on flocks of sheep (*pulvérage*), harbour dues, tolls on barges, etc. (*cayage* or *rivage*), for the shipping or unshipping of merchandise; gate tolls (*portage*) on passing city gates; freightage (*de conduit* or *travers*); escort tolls (*guiage*), when the traveller wished to be accompanied by a seigneurial escort for safety, etc." [2]

It must be observed that in the case of the small merchant

[1] Pigeonneau, *Histoire du Commerce de la France*, vol. i. p. 99.
[2] *Ibid.* i. pp. 96–98.

or small professional manufacturer the dues were deducted from what formed his essential means of existence, while the peasant who sold only the surplus of his produce at any rate began by laying aside what was necessary for his living. No amount of competition could hinder the peasant from living in a liberal manner at home upon all that his labour directly provided : it could only diminish the profits he made by trading with what exceeded his needs; but competition, on the contrary, sometimes prevented the trader and manufacturer from securing what was necessary for his existence, because his produce was not of the kind on which it was possible to live directly.

There was, then, an immense difference between agriculture and industry, between the domain and the small workshop, from the point of view of security of life and power of emancipation.

The analysis we have made gives some idea of it, but historical facts attest it in a high degree. As a matter of fact, the majority of the peasants were gradually and peaceably emancipating themselves from the ninth to the eleventh century, but the artisans and merchants in the towns were still not emancipated at the beginning of the twelfth century ! And they had to move heaven and earth in order to gain their liberty.

We shall see this great upheaval if we continue to follow the history of the communal movement.

CHAPTER XIX

THE COMMUNAL MOVEMENT IN FRANCE—*Continued*

THE object of the present chapter is to show how the towns which, as we have seen, had become feudal in the north of France, or at any rate a large number of them, passed under the communal system.

This movement, as we have already indicated, owed its origin to the development of agriculture, which was the direct result of the organisation of the Frankish domain, and which always brings in its train the development of urban industries.

Agricultural prosperity, in fact, is accompanied by an increased desire for animal comforts and for new and perfected forms of utensils of everyday use. Then manufacture becomes of sufficient importance to enable people who devote themselves to it exclusively to make a profit. They give up all cultivation of land, and, since the country has no longer any hold upon them, they find their natural centre in the town, which is favourable to the development of business owing to the numbers of people who flock into it periodically for religious services or for marketing.

This phenomenon appeared in the feudalised part of the north of France at the end of the eleventh and at the beginning of the twelfth century. In the ninth century feudalism had openly triumphed over royal power; in the tenth its internal bonds had been loosened as each individual, from the vassal to the serf, tried to become more independent; in the eleventh we should expect this growing liberty to produce its natural result, an outburst of productive activity and fresh openings for work.

Everything at that time bears witness to this prosperity.

Charters and documents indicate that it was a period when a great deal of fresh land was cleared. Immense stretches of

forests still flourished on the upper and lower parts of the plateaux: men began to encroach on them, to penetrate them, to cross them, to make great clearings in them; it was, as it were, a second conquest of the land, at places where Nature had been left untouched or had reasserted her claim to the soil. Historians have invented a legend on this point: they noted a revival of rare activity, a return to hope and progress after the terrors of the year 1000. They forget that life does not spring from torpor: even supposing the movement, the outburst of energy which they observe, had been for an instant restrained and checked by passing plagues and empty apprehensions (which, by the way, have been very much exaggerated) it cannot have been engendered by them; it must have originated from other causes. It obviously springs from vital and fruitful forces whose regular progress we have traced through the preceding centuries; it is the logical consequence of those forces.

Parallel with this agricultural prosperity, which is the point of departure, industrial prosperity, which is the point of arrival, so to speak, is directly attested by the extraordinary number of buildings which were produced at that time.

It was then that those monumental castles were built in stone, with imperishable walls, with a multitude of majestic towers, with gigantic dungeons, with high-vaulted halls, with vast inner courts, true palaces of a rich and powerful race. They were the first examples of a style of building which later centuries have merely imitated and improved. The eleventh century is animated by a bold spirit of invention which is the father of arts, and its inventions are expressive of energy and grandeur, with a primitive simplicity. The splendid fortress, a dwelling-place worthy of princes, which I have just roughly pictured, was the immediate successor of the old wooden castle, standing on its knoll, surrounded by wooden buildings and engirt by its palisade.

At the same time the great Romanesque churches appeared, masterpieces which, with their majesty and ample proportions, contrast strangely with the small low churches which preceded them and which can still be seen joined on to them at certain places where the new building has remained unfinished. Everyone has heard the story told of the fervour with which the

churches were built: how all classes of society took part in their construction, and every individual wished to contribute something—either money, or personal help, or experience. We are astounded when we count the number of wonderful monuments which have been reared since that time even in the most insignificant places. What is left of them bears witness to the magnificent workmanship, the large amount of money spent on them, the original and vigorous sense of art of the builders. A new art was created which dimmed the genius of the centuries following the Middle Ages—and we know what marvellous things that genius produced.

"When building is active, all industries," they say, "flourish." It is obvious that these epic castles and magnificent Romanesque cathedrals were not built at such heavy costs and with such a knowledge of art simply to remain empty of all furniture, devoid of all ornament, and frequented solely by miserably dressed people. It is clear that the ardour of perfecting everything which was manifested in this outburst of architecture fired all the other trades as well.

Two sketches will give some idea of it:

In the preceding period, "the furniture of a castle consisted of wooden benches, chests where clothes were kept, tressels and planks which served as tables. The carpets, often even the beds, were heaps of leaves or trusses of straw, placed on the stone floor. The only signs of any objects of luxury, which could not be furnished by the fief, were a few precious goblets, a few gold or silver vases, handed down from generation to generation, until they had to be sold to pay the ransom of the knight or to be melted for coin; furs brought from the countries of the north; birds of prey dressed for the hunt; and above all beautiful chargers, and arms of a stout make which were at once the pride and security of the baron. A good sword had its genealogy and its history: it was worth its weight in gold; and the value of a shield was rated at that of the work done by harvesters in 240 days."[1] We cannot help seeing that that is not the sort of furniture that is suited to the magnificent feudal mansions which rivalled the Romanesque churches. Archæologists, however, have reproduced the wooden furniture, the iron work, the tapestry, the gold and silver work, and the

[1] Pigeonneau, *Histoire du Commerce de la France*, vol. i. p. 95.

dresses, whose shape, style, and ornamentation harmonised well with the architectural style of that epoch. When a new and very effective style of architecture appears, there is a sort of luxuriant growth, as if by the same inspiration, in everything else. If the reader wishes to get from one example an idea of the pomp of those times, he has only to read in the chroniclers, or in the works of the authorities on these subjects, the description of the abbey church which Suger had built at St. Denis; he will realise that a building on the exterior of which so much wealth had been lavished was not exactly meant to remain devoid of splendour within.

The communal movement, which took place at that very time, appears as the entirely logical result of the great industrial development we have noted. We shall examine it next.

The aim of the communal movement was to withdraw the population of the feudal towns—an essentially industrial population—from the arbitrary control of the lord which I described and explained before. There is nothing which industry can so ill put up with as arbitrary control, because it constitutes something unforeseen which escapes the already elaborate calculations upon which industry is forced to live. It forms a stumbling-block to all the manufacturer's clever speculations and combinations. That is true of all periods. Even in modern times the same things occurred as the result of MacKinley's Bills: America suddenly stopped her importation of European manufactured goods simply by subjecting them, not to enormous taxes, but to capricious and fluctuating taxes.

But though it may be of vital importance to get rid of the arbitrary element, the difficulty is to find means to do so. The manufacturers of the principal feudal towns had actually secured those means by the end of the eleventh century owing to the progress that manufacture had made: they had become richer, more numerous, and better trained in business. With wealth, numbers, and ability anything may be undertaken with some chance of success.

But none of the manufacturers was of sufficient importance to undertake anything as a private man, on his own account, for the public good. It must be remembered that at that time industry was carried on entirely in small workshops. The reasons for this were twofold. In the first place, the artisan

came from agricultural families established by the Franks in separate households, and each of them, when emigrating to a town, preserved that tradition and settled apart without trying to find partners in his work—his trade did not require that he should, and a partner would only have been in his way. In the second place, the work was done by hand, with very simple machinery, and demand exceeded supply, a phenomenon which always occurs at the beginning of a period of prosperity in which industry is encouraged. The large employer, whose business it is to provide for the setting up of large pieces of work or to get orders from a larger connection, did not exist at the beginning of this industrial renaissance.

So it was of prime necessity that these small artisans should come to an understanding between themselves, and act together, in order to succeed in checking in some way the arbitrary control which dominated them.

It was not a very difficult matter. Their interests were identical. No one had any interest in the arbitrary control of the lord. The artisans had admirable opportunities for conferring together and acting in concert, living as they did in the narrow confines of an urban aggregation.

It was simply a question of giving a definite form to what was already a tacit understanding. It was necessary to find a method of association which would be understood by everyone : it is only under that condition that persons who agree spontaneously upon a point can hope to effect anything.

The artisans of the feudal towns did not invent this method of association : it is a dangerous thing to invent a new method when it is a question of getting a whole population of insignificant people to march together. Nor did they borrow any contrivances from the old *municipes* : we saw that all traces of the Roman municipal system had disappeared from the feudal towns in the north. It is true that at that very time, and even a little before, the towns of the south also took steps towards independence ; but the two movements in the north and in the south were merely concomitant, they did not originate from each other. They sprang at once from the same cause, industrial progress.

The south happened to be a little in front of the north owing to two circumstances.

In the first place, the south was, through its proximity to the East and, thanks to the Mediterranean, in much closer relation with the East, whither the arts and the luxury of antiquity had retired before the barbarians. Thus it came about that the prosperity which was due to the feudal evolution took the form, in the southern towns, of a revival of commerce rather than of a revival of manufacture, and the merchant gets his returns far more promptly than the manufacturer.

In the second place, the south had been far less disturbed by the feudal system than the north, and we saw that it had preserved a degenerate form of the Roman type of government: the inhabitants elected the municipal officers, and the count sent his representative to levy the taxes which accrued to him. Thus the townsfolk had preserved a ready-made organisation, which enabled them to act in concert with regard to the count: the municipal officers elected by the people were empowered to apply to him, either through his representative or directly, to obtain a regular assessment of the taxes, or to arrive at an understanding concerning the diverse claims made by the count's administration. Moreover, the count was ready enough to fall in with them, because he had never been, as in the north, lord over the town, in virtue of his lordship over his domain.

Thus, in the south, there was already an established form of association in the towns before any movement towards independence existed: this form was used to procure exemptions.

But the northern towns did not borrow it from the south; they had lost it, and did not readopt it in any sense. They used a form of association which the Old German invasion, not the Frankish, had introduced into Gaul. It was the *guild*.

The guild, unlike feudalism, which was a coalition of domains, was founded essentially upon personal bonds. It did not unite people only for a particular object, but for any purpose in which help was needed.

"As a promise of help and support," says Augustin Thierry, "it embraced all the dangers, all the great accidents to which man is liable; it was a mutual assurance against violence and abuse, against fire and shipwreck, and also against legal damages incurred for crimes and even for offences that had been proved by evidence. In pagan Germany each of these associations was under the patronage of a god or a hero whose name served

to distinguish it. Each had leaders chosen from its midst, a common treasury enriched by annual contributions, and obligatory regulations for all its members. *It thus formed a distinct society in the midst of the tribe or nation.* The society of the guild was not restricted, like that of the German canton, to a definite area: it had no limit of any kind, it spread to distant places, and united persons of every kind, from the prince and the noble to the labourer or the free artisan." [1]

It can be easily understood that the Franks, who in Gaul came into the midst of the earlier invaders, the Old Germans, were not much attracted by this kind of association, with its thoroughly communal form, which was entirely opposed to the exclusively territorial system upon which they had built their well-regulated society. So the guild came to be publicly reviled and officially prohibited. It is a well-known fact. I will limit myself to quoting three capitularies: the first is Charlemagne's, the second is Louis the Debonnaire's, and the third Carloman's.

The year 779: "Let no one dare to be among the number of those who conspire to form guilds and bind themselves by oaths; and even though they may make arrangements among themselves for purposes of mutual help or for provision against fire or shipwreck, let everyone be warned against swearing to join such associations." [2]

The year 817: "With regard to the guilds of serfs which have been formed in Flanders, . . . and in other maritime places, we desire it to be enjoined upon the lords of those serfs through our *Missi* to prevent them henceforth from forming such guilds. And furthermore, that the aforesaid lords be advised that those among them whose serfs shall determine to form guilds of this kind, after this our will shall have been made known to them, must severally pay a penalty of sixty sous." [3]

The year 884: "It is our will that the priests and officers of the count command the villagers not to unite themselves in

[1] *Récits des Temps mérovingiens; Considérations sur l'histoire de France,* chap. vi. p. 167.

[2] *Capitula Caroli Magni, apud Scriptores rer. Gallic, et Francic.,* vol. v. p. 647.

[3] *Capitula Ludovici Pii,* Baluze, vol. i. col. 775.

associations, commonly known as guilds, against those who make them pay dues; but rather that they should lay their cause before the priest sent by the bishop (the seigneurial bishop) and before the count's officer, who is stationed in the locality for the purpose of setting everything straight in accordance with prudence and reason." [1]

But however thoroughly the guilds were repressed in the north, where feudalism had developed to the full, they had continued to flourish in the extreme north, especially in the Gothic parts of Scandinavia, where they held a position of honour in the twelfth century; and they had flourished in the south at the same time, where they had been propagated by the Visigoths, and where the feudal system had never flourished. It was the south which conceived the idea of using the forms of the guild for the creation of that vast popular association, the Truce of God: each person swore an oath to the bishop, or to the archdeacon in charge of temporal affairs, to bring armed assistance to his neighbour to repress the attacks of those who violated the Truce, and to obtain compensation for those who had been injured. The association was thus restricted as to its object, but not as to its area, for it extended all over France, thanks to its general utility; and was not restricted as to persons, for it embraced villeins, ecclesiastics, and nobles: even children of fifteen were made to take the oath. It was owing to its application to a very special object that the guild regained some sort of credit in the north, when the Truce of God was introduced there chiefly by the endeavours of the Capetians, who aimed at the position of patrons of the Church and guardians of the peace of the kingdom. But it was only acknowledged in a half-hearted way, for these guilds, which laid a tight hold on the individual and yet embraced anyone who liked to join, were bound to degenerate and break up before long in places where the people had become unaccustomed to the patriarchal system. And that was exactly what happened to the Truce of God: very soon the prudent lords and the ecclesiastical authorities agreed to suppress it, and to oppose guilds generally, which, in fact, turned out badly in nine cases out of ten.

Such was the state of that ancient institution when the

[1] *Capitula Carlomanni Regis*, Baluze, vol. ii. col. 290.

artisans and petty people of the feudal towns decided to use it as a means of coalition against the arbitrary control of the lord. But, under the influence of the territorial system in the midst of which they lived, they modified it in such a way as to give it strength and assure its success, though they probably were not conscious of so doing: they restricted their association to their locality, to the town. They called this union simply *communio*, *communitas*, or, in low Latin, *communia*: in ordinary language, *commune*. They also gave it other names, some of which arose naturally, others which were imitated from the guilds, such as "Fraternity" and "Friendship."

The communal covenant of Aire, in Artois, shows very clearly in its wording the tradition which binds it to the guild, while at the same time it is definitely restricted to the town: according to the preamble of a charter of 1188, it dates as far back as the beginning of the twelfth century. It runs as follows:

"As many as belong to the Friendship *of the town* have promised and confirmed their words by an oath upon their faith that they will aid each other like brothers in whatsoever is good and useful. That if a man commit any offence, whether of word or deed, against another, he that is injured shall not take vengeance himself nor shall his family . . . but he shall lodge a complaint against the offender, who shall pay a penalty for his crime according as shall be determined by twelve *chosen* judges. And if he that did the wrong or he that suffered it, after three times receiving warning, refuse to submit to this arbitration, he shall be expelled from the Friendship as an evil and perjured man.

"If a member of the Friendship have lost his property by pillage or otherwise, and be able to show traces of what he hath lost, he shall lodge a complaint before him who shall have been set at the head of the Friendship (*ad præfectum Amicitiæ*), and he, after having convoked the Friends *of the town*, shall go with them in search of it as far as a day's journey there and back—(this, by the way, is the same as in the Truce of God)—and he who shall refuse or neglect to go in search shall pay five sous as a fine to the Friendship.

"If a disturbance occur *in the town*, whosoever is a member of the Friendship and hears of a disturbance, and does not go

to it and bear help with all his might as need demands, shall pay a fine of five sous to the community.

"If a member of the Friendship have had his house burned down, or if he have had to pay the greater part of his possessions for his ransom when he hath been taken prisoner, each of the Friends shall give a crown to assist the impoverished Friend."[1]

The commune, it is clear, differed from the guild only in so far as it was limited to the land belonging to a town. The natural and fairly obvious cause of this limitation was that the commune had in view local interests. Its object was to negotiate with the lord of the place on friendly terms concerning the relations on which he stood with the people of that place: the real objects and interests of these petty people went no further. An understanding, a well-concerted general action, was the only thing possible in an urban centre where the inhabitants were crowded together, and especially with a people that was not accustomed to enterprises on a large scale. It would only have embarrassed them had they extended their association outside the town.

In order to form their association they had to seize the opportunity afforded by some fortunate circumstance which accidentally caused the ruling power to be absent from the town: they chose a moment when the lay or ecclesiastical lord or his representative was away. As soon as a mutual oath had been taken, chiefs were chosen to form a council, and among them one was appointed to take the lead. The chiefs elect swore a second oath that they would discharge their duties loyally. A subscription was voted to defray the expenses of the administration. All this was the same as in the guild.

When the commune or community had been formed in this way, the members armed themselves with any of their workman's tools which could be used as weapons—hatchets, cutting instruments of all sorts, bars and lumps of iron, as well as old arms and plain sticks, not to mention the variety of objects that were used as projectiles. Thanks to the superiority of their numbers, they were able to take possession of the men whom the lord had left as a guard for the town. They then shut the town gates.

The fact that the town was usually surrounded by walls,

[1] *Recueil des ordonnances des rois de France*, vol. xii. p. 562.

made it possible for this crowd in revolt to assume all of a sudden the aspect of a military force capable of holding the lord in check: otherwise all resistance in the struggle would have been impossible. The lord, on being warned of the league, hastened to return, accompanied by his fighting band, which he reinforced, if necessary, from that of some ally. When he arrived before the closed gates of the town, a parley was held. The chiefs became spokesmen for the people of the commune, and declared that they were ready to open the gates of the town and prove themselves the lord's most faithful subjects, on condition that he would swear an oath, and state in writing that he would respect their grievances: on condition that he would give them a *charter*, and swear to observe it. They generally demanded to be freed from the servile obligations of mortmain and *formariage*—that is to say, the obligation of paying a due and obtaining the consent of the lord for the transmission of their estates and for marrying as they chose. With regard to the taxes that were levied at haphazard and at odd times upon the produce of their industry, they demanded that they should be replaced by a single annual tax, fixed once for all, except in very special and clearly specified cases—as, for example, if the lord should have to pay his ransom, or had to arm his son as a knight, etc. Finally, they demanded that the fines imposed by the lord's court of law should be regulated according to a definite scale. I need hardly say that these conditions put an end to the unlimited profits which the lord derived from the inhabitants, and placed the town in the same position, from the point of view of dues, as the freed domain, which was unencumbered of its servile obligations and relieved of all taxation in return for an invariable rent. Thus the lord was reduced all along the line as much by the estates as by the town to the state of an annuitant with a fixed annuity.

After some words had been exchanged they usually came to blows. The lord tried to force an entrance. Ordinarily, he failed: we shall see, a little later, when we come to speak of feudal decadence, why he was ill equipped, from a military standpoint, for taking a town by assault. His failure made him decide to resign himself to grant the inhabitants their demands. Then the gates were opened, and he was received with the liveliest expressions of joy and the greatest marks

of honour. But once he was in the town and experienced a pressing need for money, he easily forgot the exact limits of his diminished rights; moreover, he was quite ready to declare that his sworn promises had been unfairly extracted from him by the revolt: and matters returned to their former state.

Those who had put faith in his oath were very indignant, and brooded in secret upon their disappointment, until another favourable opportunity occurred, like the first, for making a fresh oath and forming a commune a second time. The whole performance as we have just described it was gone through again, until the people had obtained a fresh oath that their former demands should be respected. But this time the inhabitants determined to get effective guarantees for the maintenance of their acquired rights. They claimed (1) the right of remaining permanently united in a commune—that is to say, of remaining bound together by oath, instead of dissolving their association; (2) the right of self-government, by electing peers, or *sheriffs*, from among themselves, who should be charged to preserve order and see to the public interests, and a superior magistrate, called "major" or mayor; (3) the right of forming an independent militia for the defence of their liberties and the protection of their town. In this way the lord was prevented from having any representatives in the town, whether of high rank or low; but the peers and the mayor were charged to swear him an oath of allegiance and homage in the name of the commune, which was simply a pledge that they would not attempt any violation of his rights, and would help in the defence of the fief. The commune itself undertook to see to the payment of the stipulated urban tax (upon which they had come to an agreement).

All this meant the complete deposition of the lord from his authority, except in so far as he was recognised in the oath of allegiance and received the stipulated tax.

This, then, was the triumphant establishment of the commune. The causes which produced it, and which we have followed throughout their development, occurred in all the towns, so that in the twelfth century, as was natural, there was a rapid and spontaneous development of communes in every place in the feudal north.

Owing to similar causes, which developed more rapidly in

the south, as we have seen, the southern towns acquired their independence a little earlier than the northern towns, using forms borrowed from the *municipes* of the barbarian period.

We have been able to describe only the dominant facts, but this urban emancipation took place in other ways as well; they are, however, only variants of the same phenomenon.

In the first place, we are bound to say that the communes were sometimes justly and favourably received by the lords, who recognised them as a means to an inevitable enfranchisement, like that of the rural serfs: such was the case at Noyon, where the commune was organised by the seigneurial bishop; also in Flanders, where the counts approved of the creation of the great communes, which became so famous there.

In other places the lords met the communal movement half-way, by making their feudal towns into *burgess towns*, with exemption from the servile obligations of mortmain and *formariage*, and from arbitrarily imposed taxes, like the communes, but ruled by sheriffs and mayors, whom the lords themselves chose from among the inhabitants with their assistance. By that means they retained a portion of their ruling authority.

Whatever slight variations there may have been, it nevertheless came about that from one end of France to the other the whole of the new population which the development of manufacture had caused to spring up in the towns escaped from the control of the domain and the control of the lord which the Franks had established. The strength that had been based on the estate was there replaced by a strength based on personal bonds, on the community. The old order of things which had prevailed before the coming of the Franks reappeared: namely, the Roman *municipes* and the guild of the Old Germans, two institutions of the patriarchal world. An industrial population, which does not make its living on the estate, nor bases its independence upon the possession of the land,—from which all the necessaries of life may be directly drawn,—but whose existence depends on transactions between one person and another, and on what will bring success in dealing with others, such a population was a very suitable medium for the development of those institutions.

These urban associations had not the same characteristics

as those formed among particularist families, which were restricted to a particular purpose, and were only temporary. They were, on the contrary, of vital importance, and so formed as to be able to embrace all needs; they were, moreover, permanent: they belonged to the patriarchal type. That is at once evident from the way in which they worked. Their members resorted to them as if to the one obvious resource for every emergency. By so doing they fulfilled a part of the communal oath they made: the promise to give mutual help in all difficulties. If anything was amiss with their affairs in the city, the people appealed to the town authority and demanded that the urban community should take steps to set them right and provide for their interests. Nothing could be more striking in this respect than the way in which the communal or municipal authority was asked by the artisans to sanction the rules of the corporations of working men, who looked up to their commune or their municipality as the Arab does to his tribe: in their eyes it was an association which was responsible for the existence and the interests of all its members.

Initiative in this social system consists not in being able to find a way out of difficulties quite independently, but in appealing to a body which has power to coerce the other members to act in the desired direction. It was in that way that the artisans of the freed towns exercised a vigilant pressure upon them to coerce them to look after the interests of their trades. They intended to make, and they did make, their fortunes, not by overcoming, by their superior abilities, the difficulties caused by competition, but by compelling the inhabitants, by stringent industrial and commercial regulations, to patronise them exclusively, and divide their custom almost uniformly between their different shops.

So, owing to these urban institutions which were reintroduced from the Old World, the private and personal initiative which the Franks had introduced into the country disappeared from many parts of France. Personal responsibility disappeared almost everywhere to a certain extent before the community, with its regular and practical efficiency, and the idea which is inherent in it.

But still, this return to the past could not have produced a general effect, nor perhaps a very durable one, had not other

causes happened to give a more powerful impetus in the same direction. The communes, in fact, would soon have become ineffective had they been left to themselves. That, indeed, was inherent in their constitution. It was not long before they became divided into factions (which inevitably appear in associations that are responsible for everything). During all their early days they continued to lead a stormy existence, which was accompanied by disorderly movements. That is what makes the history of their formation so dramatic.

But an institution developed by their side which came to their aid, and which, by being able to dominate them, thanks to their difficulties and divisions, maintained them, but took great care not to show them the road which would lead them back to individual initiative and personal independence: this institution is Royal Power.

We shall soon see how royal power in France, which was handed down from the Merovingians, and also dated back to communal times, found once more the road to influence.

But we must first see what transformation took place in the resources and mode of life of the owners of estates, the real successors of the Franks, which made them at this very period incapable of carrying on the work of their predecessors; and how, under the action of these combined causes, feudal society foundered, after having reached such heights of power.

CHAPTER XX

CHIVALRY OR FEUDAL MILITARISM

WE have already mentioned what natural causes led to the constitution of the communes, and what already known form of association they used. But we have not explained precisely how it came about that the seigneurial authority, which was exercised in so sovereign a manner over the feudal towns, soon withdrew almost everywhere before their claims.

Let us consider what a commune really was: a sworn league of artisans who made themselves masters of their town on the sly, shut the gates, and sheltered themselves within the walls. All the towns that were dependent on the same manor did not rise together; the lord had only to deal with one at a time: the communal league was, as we have seen, limited to the inhabitants of one town. What, then, was the lord's real condition at the end of the eleventh century and at the beginning of the twelfth, that he should have been forced to a compromise under these circumstances? That is the question we have now to elucidate in order to realise what events were then sweeping away the feudal system, just as before we formed some idea of those which led up to it.

The feudal system is generally supposed to have sprung from the dissolution of the Carlovingian Empire in the ninth century, and is thought to have gone on gaining strength and tightening its bonds till the twelfth century. According to that theory, it would have come into contact with the small communes and the petty Capetian kings when it was in the fulness of its vigour, and would have bowed before them. That would have been very obliging on its part, and nothing could have been more compliant. But things did not happen, and could not have happened in that way.

The feudal system did not originate in the ninth century; it began to be formed by means of the "immunities," in opposition to the Merovingian domination, as soon as that dynasty was seriously established in Gaul—that is to say, quite as early as the seventh century.[1] In the ninth its cohesive power was at its height: all the estates, in order to secure their inviolability against the interference of the royal officials by placing themselves under the protection of the most powerful landowners, were for a moment grouped under no more than thirty great suzerains.

But when royalty had completely lost its power under the last Carlovingians, victorious feudalism had no longer need of so close and solid a union, and relaxed its bonds: the emancipation of the vassals and the enfranchisement of the serfs went on during the tenth and eleventh centuries; so that, by the end of the eleventh, when the insurrection of the communes took place, the power of the lords had already been gradually diminishing for two centuries, owing to the progress that had been made towards liberty.

Feudalism, then, is divided into two great periods: one of *concentration*, the other of *deconcentration*. The gradual decline of the power of the lords during the second period was not the effect of any reaction against the particularist form of society from which it had originated, but simply the accomplishment of the law that power involved. The seigneurial power had been organised solely in opposition to royal power; once that power was suppressed, the movement towards independence, which had led the landowners to unite their domains in a league, necessarily impelled them to break up the league. The vassals of all ranks must have rivalled one another in their efforts to rid themselves of their suzerains. It was very much the same kind of movement which at the very first drove the Franks to free themselves from the Merovingian *truste* as soon as the north of Gaul had been conquered and the object for which they had joined it was achieved.

But whilst the power of the lords declined in this way, everything it had freed from the Romano-barbarian system of administration in its own struggle for liberty continued to advance behind it. For this reason the period of the decon-

[1] See above, Chap. VI. pp. 109, 110.

centration of feudalism was really the period when it was at its zenith, which was marked by the increasing independence and the increasing amount of land in the hands of the people, and signalised in various branches of human activity by results that are full of originality and grandeur, which are illumined by the full brilliancy of the particularist spirit.[1]

So there is nothing mysterious in the very considerable diminution of the power of the lords at the time when the communes appeared. And it was owing to that diminution of power that the communes were established so easily in spite of the difficulties some of them encountered at the outset. They were the last to embark upon the road to emancipation, which had been opened up and prepared by the vassals and the serfs: the task is lightest for those who are the last to come to the work.

Since the great feudatories of the first Carlovingians had wound up the empire, the vassals had not ceased striving, as we know, to diminish their military obligations in every possible way with regard to the duration of military service, the distance of their expeditions, and the nature of the cases necessitating war. In all the histories we read of the "disorder" of the tenth century, when, upon the nearly complete disappearance of royalty, the inferior nobles, secure behind their castle walls, began on all sides to make themselves independent of their suzerains as far as possible. So the decay of the power of the lords dated a long time back, and had therefore gone a considerable distance before the communes rebelled. The serfs, likewise, who had been obliged to contribute work in the fields, but not military service, had rivalled each other in getting exemption from the forced labour to which they were liable on the reserve estate, the working of which the lord directed just as Charlemagne himself did, as we saw. They redeemed themselves from forced labour with the master's consent, or by some arrangement which the lord made of his own accord, by the payment of rent in kind or in money. So from this point of view also the power of the lords had been diminishing for a long time, and we must add that it had almost entirely disappeared by the time the communes revolted.

[1] See above, Chap. XII. p. 205, and Chap. XIX. pp. 301–303.

I have recalled to the reader's mind only a few of the main events well known to everyone, in order to enable him more easily to carry himself in imagination back to the period we are studying ; but there is everywhere an abundance of evidence, which I have indicated elsewhere, concerning this progressive emancipation of the vassals and the serfs from the end of the ninth century.[1]

The position of the lord at the time of the formation of the communes was definitely determined by the state of affairs at the end of the eleventh century resulting from this social transformation.

From the military standpoint, owing to the effect of the movement of the vassals towards independence, the lord was for three parts of the year an officer without troops, and for the fourth part was an officer at the head of a very reduced and unwilling army. He counted his knights by units and not by dozens.

From the point of view of property, owing to the effect of the enfranchisement of the serfs, he no longer enjoyed the use of his lands, except in so far as he collected a regular rent from his tenants.

There was in very truth a vast difference between this lord and the " baron " of the ninth century of whom Charlemagne was simply the most finished type !

When one of these diminished lords found himself greeted with the declaration of a commune, what could he do ?

What could he do in a military way ? It was a question of besieging a town. An enterprise of that kind could not be attempted with a handful of vassals on horseback, who were only bound to serve for a short time. So the lord had recourse to all kinds of feints, and, finally, had to grant concessions in order to get the gates opened for him. It might have been possible to decoy the country people into coming to the siege by saying that, as the town was endeavouring to set itself free, it was a case of the defence of the fief, though even that was open to dispute. But the rustics, the emancipated serfs, would not have allowed themselves to be easily persuaded to march against common people like themselves, who were aspiring to the same freedom as they had won. Besides, they

[1] See above. Chap. XII, p. 205.

were within their rights if they refused to go farther than a day's journey from home, sometimes less, and insisted on returning the next day or the same evening. It must be remembered, too, that the town possessed no lands outside its walls which it might have been possible to plunder, in order to provoke a sortie or a surrender, which was in those days one of the accepted methods of the art of besieging. Lastly, in attacking the city in revolt, the lord was attacking his own possessions : if he pushed the war to extremities, he was simply destroying his own property. In short, he was fighting against himself. It was to his interest to come to terms. What profit would it have been to him to have in his hands a town that had been taken by assault and sacked ? Who would have come to live in it then ? From whom could he have exacted the reduced and immutable tax which the members of commune proposed to allow him ? And what could he do as landowner ? He was forced, whether he willed it or no, to humble himself to accept from the artisans of the town the payment of a fixed rental, just as he had already accepted it from the tenants of his estates : no victory over the commune could free him from that consequence. The artisans, as a matter of fact, who every day went to swell the population of the towns, found this fixity of dues absolutely essential to their business ; besides, they had experienced the benefits of it in the agricultural work which they had just left. So that the lord who obstinately refused to come to any agreement of that kind would have completely put a stop to the peopling of his town ; the artisans would have gone to the towns of other lords who were more liberal or better advised and made no objection to the fixed tax. So we need not be astonished to find that many lords not only gave way to the communes, but sided with them from the first, or even went half-way to meet their demands. Those among them who succeeded in retaining some control over the nomination of the urban magistrates by establishing the system of " burgess towns " were none the less obliged to promise those towns that the taxes should be immutable. The lords, then, could hope to realise no other object in their struggle with the artisans than a settlement with them on the best terms possible, but in any case they were obliged to come to terms.

So much for the explanation of the twofold weakness of the lord as soldier and as landowner in relation to the commune: his weakness was complete.

A further proof of what I have just said concerning the lord's position from the military point of view lies in the following facts. At that very time we find that the lords were obliged, when they wished to make war at all hazards, to employ "mercenary troops." They had to pay knights who were not their own vassals, or who did not consider themselves bound to go to battle as vassals. They were even reduced to taking into their pay bands of vagrants who made war their trade. That was the beginning of the soldier's profession, the first appearance of armies enrolled for pay. The feudal army was well on the way to dissolution.

There is also a further proof of what I said regarding the lord's position as landowner. At that very time we find that the seigneurial dues more and more took the form of rent. Step by step the lord was driven to hire out everything in return for rent. Even the people to whom he intrusted the administration of justice, either as his subordinates or as his representatives, received that office in feu; it was known as a "fief without land." They made their profits out of the fines, the confiscations, and the fees for lawsuits, and in return they paid a yearly sum to the lord. Gradually all the seigneurial duties came to be managed in the same way. We shall soon see the results of this change in the lord's "means of living," the final consequences of the conversion of the working landowner and the ruler into an annuitant.

Now that we have realised in some detail the lord's position in relation to the communal movement, it is very interesting to find evidence of it in the charter of one of the communes. I will quote one which comes from the Sire of Coucy, a name celebrated in the history of the proudest and most dreaded lords.

"Since, according to the general custom of our lands of Coucy, all persons who come to these our lands are our men or women under the obligations of mortmain and *formariage*, from dislike of those obligations several persons have ceased to live in our said lands: the which persons, by going to live outside our said lands *in certain places*, gain their freedom

without our leave, and can free themselves whenever they please, *by the which the value of our said lands is much diminished.*

"Our predecessors, the lords of Coucy, were *requested by the inhabitants to put an end to those obligations,* and the said inhabitants *offered to pay a fixed and permanent rental,* upon the which our said father found that it was greatly to his profit to put an end to the aforesaid custom and take the profit offered to him. But our said father, before he could grant the aforesaid request, departed this life.

"From the time that we have become of age, the inhabitants of our towns have come several times before us with the request that it may be our good will and pleasure to free our said land and towns—all the inhabitants now dwelling and about to dwell in them—from the said obligations and other personal services of every kind, for ever, *offering us from each of the said towns a fixed rental and permanent revenue of silver, for us and our successors in perpetuity*: namely, for Coucy-la-Ville and the inhabitants thereof ten Paris *livres* (*i.e.* ten shillings); for the town of Fraisne and the inhabitants thereof twenty-five sous; etc. . . ." Then follow the names of twenty-seven towns or villages. The charter ends with the acceptance of these "rentals in perpetuity, for the Sire of Coucy and his heirs in perpetuity and for ever." [1]

The Sire de Coucy was right in thinking that he was cornered by necessity, and was, after all, choosing the better path. It is none the less true that, if the position of the lord was difficult when the communes appeared, their formation made it far worse. The lord then not only sank to the position of an officer without troops for three-quarters of the year or even more, but saw a communal militia, or militia of burgesses, spring up beside him, which was quite ready to fight without him or even against him. He no longer derived any benefit from the increasing prosperity of the towns, which merely paid him an immutable tax; but, on the contrary, their prosperity opposed his interests by creating at his door a wealth and power which moved in the opposite way to his own—that is to say, their wealth and power went on increasing, while his own remained stationary and were bound, for that very reason, to diminish more and more.

[1] Leber, *Histoire du pouvoir municipal,* p. 336.

When all was reckoned, what still remained to him from the military system which was of any service to him? His horse, his armour, and his men-at-arms. And what did he retain of his manorial possessions? A regular pension.

He seems to have been specially prepared and strangely compelled to become a knight-errant. That is exactly what the feudal lord became at the beginning of the eleventh century. It is a very curious, radical evolution, but there can be no doubt about it. Let us trace it out, however.

Though he had no regular army, or practically none, any longer, and no feudal band, yet the lord none the less remained, *in his own person*, a warrior. He was even more than ever a warrior, for this reason: he could no longer count upon anyone but himself, as a rule. When he lost his authority on every side, his bodily strength was his last means of maintaining his prestige and his power. His strength of arm was a force which still remained his own. So it was his chief business in life to exercise himself in the use of arms; that was the basis of his education. And his worth was reckoned by that, rather than by his titles and by the extent of his domains.

What could a man who carried the development of his physical energy to that point do upon his lands, where everything, including even his administrative and judicial duties, was permanently leased out on fixed conditions? He was absolutely driven to find some employment which would exercise his exceptional capacity. He was obliged to go away to some place where he might *achieve exploits*, perform *feats of valour*, and prove *his gallantry*. If he found a noble object for his energy, he became a Christian knight, a crusader, a redresser of wrongs, a slayer of infidels. If he aimed at his own advancement or merely a brilliant career, he became a conquering or gallant knight.

This, then, is the genesis of that *chivalry* which seemed suddenly to spring out of the earth at the end of the eleventh century, and made such an unheard-of stir from one end of Europe to the other.

The change in the lord's "*means* of living" necessarily brought with it a corresponding change in his "*mode* of life." That is an unfailing law of society.

It remains for us to see what light this clear analysis of

the causes of the feudal evolution in its period of deconcentration throws upon some important points in history. Thanks to what we now know, we can easily see for ourselves the explanation of what I shall content myself by setting forth shortly as follows:

1. We now understand what produced the leaders of those almost Homeric chivalrous expeditions which began about the very time of which we have been speaking—that is, in the eleventh century, but chiefly towards its end, and which went on through the twelfth and terminated in the thirteenth century. The heroes of those great expeditions show very clear traces of the phases through which they and their ancestors passed. From the traditional estate-managing lord they inherited a spirit of independence which did not fear any isolation nor suffer any authority over it: that is sufficiently obvious from the solitary nature of many of their enterprises and from the irreconcilable quarrels which often broke up their alliances. From their new position as lords with an income came their want of employment, the facilities for absenting themselves from their estates, the taste for change of scene, and a curiosity about things in distant lands. Their athletic habits made them go in pursuit of *feats of valour* or *heroic deeds* (*gestes*). When such were in prospect they thought nothing of travelling enormous distances along difficult roads, far from the quiet corners where their manors were situated: with objects such as these, they would go to seek adversaries among the Moors, the Saracens, the Byzantine Greeks, in Portugal, Sicily, Italy, Greece, Asia Minor, Syria, Palestine, Egypt, and on the African coast. It may be true that these expeditions were signs of the great expansion of the race, but it is also certain that towards the end of the eleventh century this expansion assumed the character of a troublesome mania for warfare.[1]

In the quite peculiar way of life adopted by the knight, we cannot fail to recognise on the one hand the intense development which the original form of the feudal system had wrought in the personality of the lord, and on the other hand the want of employment to which he had been reduced by the emancipation of the vassals, the enfranchisement of the serfs, and the

[1] See above, Chap. XII. pp. 211, 212, especially the last paragraph.

formation of the communes, which drove him by imperceptible degrees to a purely military life. We must not omit to point out that the Norman lords who did not enter the feudal system till the tenth century (911)—that is to say, at the time of its deconcentration—developed almost entirely on the military lines, owing to the lack of examples of any other mode of life. Thus they were the first and most illustrious representatives of the militant type.[1]

2. We understand why the tales of the military expeditions of those times are almost exclusively tales of glorious personal exploits, of individual deeds of valour; we understand the apparently impossible exploits achieved by a few knights who are able to conquer an entire kingdom, like the sons of Tancred of Hauteville, in Italy and in Sicily, or who carve out principalities at the other end of the known world, as the crusaders did in the Romanised empire of Constantinople: they are the "records" of those knights who had become real "professionals in chivalry."

3. We understand the strange contrast there is between the lords of the first stage of feudalism and those of the second: those who shut themselves up in their domains the more they triumphed over royalty, devoted themselves to the improved cultivation of their lands, protested against warfare and distant expeditions, and made so little disturbance in the outside world that they were thought to be asleep, and the period in which they lived was spitefully called by historians the "night of the Middle Ages"; and those who, on the contrary, thirsted to leave home, were unencumbered with the care of their estates, were devoted to warlike pursuits, were enticed by their adventures to the ends of Europe, and made such a stir in the outside world that they seem to fill the history of their time by themselves. We now understand the causes, results, and just worth of this evolution.

4. We understand how it was that the second stage of feudalism was so different from the first, and originated almost nothing lasting in spite of the extraordinary enterprises it accomplished. The crusaders were not, like the members of the Frankish and Saxon invading expeditions, agricultural emigrants, whose sole object was the sound organisation and free

[1] See above, Chap. XVII. pp. 280, 231.

government of the domains they conquered. They were professional fighters, warriors, gallant knights, who had no idea at all of abandoning chivalry for agriculture, but who contented themselves by instituting on the lands they conquered the system of rents to which they were accustomed, without making any fundamental change in the existing method of managing property or in the methods of agriculture used by the native population, without changing its customs or introducing a new race of agriculturists belonging to the particularist form of society. Those of their compatriots of inferior rank who were in their train were usually unsettled persons who devoted themselves mainly to trade and did not become farmers.

It was impossible for agricultural emigrants to take part in those long expeditions, for they were very different from those which the Franks or Saxons made in the neighbourhood of the Saxon plain, in the north of Gaul, and in the south of Great Britain. We need not dwell upon the disasters which attended the attempts of the bands of people who followed the first crusades to reach the East by overland routes through Hungary, or upon the heavy cost of the sea-journey in Venetian or Genoese vessels: long and difficult journeys of that sort were not suitable for peasants in search of estates.

Commercial establishments like those of Venice and Genoa were the only settlements resulting from the conquests of the crusaders in the south and east which had a success of any duration. The rest disappeared immediately, like the Latin empire of Constantinople and like the principalities of the Holy Land; or, if it happened that the descendants of the conquerors continued to live on the conquered territory for some time, the ancient native population did not change: that was the case at Jerusalem, likewise in Italy and Sicily.

5. We understand how the epic legends which grew up around the memory of Charlemagne, and which were the foundation of the "Chansons de Geste" and the Romances of Chivalry, were so popular at that time. The men of that period had to go back to the great emperor himself to find precedents for their distant and brilliant campaigns, their almost fabulous exploits. They tasted the pleasure of hearing

their own actions praised when they listened to the legendary stories of the deeds of prowess of " Charlemagne and of Roland." But what is still more significant of the spirit of the times is the equally strong infatuation they had for a person of a far other type than theirs, who belonged to a form of society entirely opposed to that of the Franks—King Arthur, the Celt, the hero who was constantly defeated by the Saxons and under whose leadership the Britons of England succumbed, but who was none the less a brilliant warrior of the Celtic school. We must confess that that generation of feudal lords began to show a terrible want of social sense. Whilst the epics describing the glory of Charlemagne and of Arthur flourished among them, there was no literature which celebrated their immediate ancestors, the feudal lords who triumphed over the Romano-barbarian kings, the true founders of the race, of its prosperity and its liberties. The reason is that such literature would have shown them the unpopular and, I was going to say, the accusing picture of a lord of the manor busily occupied with his own estate, devoted to the good of the country, and anxious to remain in close connection with the domain which he recognised as the source of all his strength.

6. We understand how it came about that the lords conceived the idea of holding conventional displays of deeds of prowess, wherein they might exercise themselves in feats of chivalry, or make up for the expeditions which lost credit because they founded nothing durable: thence came the tournaments and all the lustre which they won. For numbers of men, chivalry was really a sport: it appeared undisguisedly as such in the tournaments, especially when the ardour for distant expeditions cooled. That was the final form it was destined to take.

7. Finally, we understand what the anger of the knights must have been when they discovered that the military forces of the burgess bands and of the communal militias were their match in prowess, which was the last of their possessions, and their last cause of pride. There is no better explanation of that unheard-of misdeed which the knights committed in falling upon their own auxiliaries, the foot-soldiers, who had earned the honour of the victory. With rage in their hearts they perceived that the foot-soldiers were the real conquerors

of that day, and that they themselves were irretrievably conquered.

To sum up :

We have no longer any cause to wonder that feudalism in its second stage, though it was so brilliant and did such extraordinary things, founded nothing stable, either in its own country or outside, in complete contrast to the earlier stage of feudalism, or that it lost everything which the previous stage had gained. Whilst the bonds which formerly bound the lord to the estate had gradually been loosened, no new ones were formed, as we shall presently see was the case with the heirs of Norman feudalism in England. Feudalism ended in absenteeism and military adventures. It is easy to imagine what became of the domain and the manorial influence while all these fine feats of arms were being accomplished far away only to be followed by great disasters. Joinville, who saw it with his own eyes, close at hand, and whose evidence cannot be doubted, describes it with singular penetration : " The King of France and the King of Navarre were very urgent that I should join the crusade, whereto I replied that I had been in the service of God and the king over-seas, and since my return I saw that the (king's) officers had so ill-treated my people that at no time had they and I been in a worse plight ; and so I told them that if I wished to act so as to please God, I should remain here to help and defend my people."

All that agricultural feudalism had founded was lost by military feudalism.

There is no longer room for surprise that during that time the royal power had every opportunity of regaining the upper hand. We shall watch its growth in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XXI

THE REVIVAL OF ROYAL POWER IN FRANCE

ROYAL power did not overthrow feudalism. But when feudalism, owing to the very nature of its origin, fell into decay, then royalty again got the upper hand. There is no other explanation of the revival of the royal domination.

How could the royal power, which was reduced to a mere cipher, an empty name, have overthrown feudalism, whose birth and growth all the might of the Merovingians and Carlovingians had not been able to prevent ?

But when, after the complete success of the struggle he had led against the Romano-barbarian system of administration, the lord was gradually stripped of his feudal army by the exemptions to which the vassals, as soon as their position was assured, had laid claim; when he had been unconsciously separated from his domain by the successive emancipations of serfs who had grown rich, thanks to the lessons in agriculture they received when he farmed the estate; when he had been excluded from the towns by the formation of the communes which the revival of industry, under the influence of a general prosperity, had called into existence to fight for its liberties; when he found his own military forces rivalled by the communal bands or bands of burgesses, whose numbers continually increased; when he was obliged to let out in fief the greater part of his manorial duties, with the object of gaining new friends or immediate supplies of money; when, under the pressure of all these things, which naturally sprang one out of the other, he gave up, in the end, the direct management of his estates and the personal government of his manor, in order to pursue the fruitless adventures of knight-errantry, then—but not till then—did royalty reappear upon the scene.

The royal power had no longer to face the all-powerful,

the genuine feudalism which had overcome the Merovingians and Carlovingians, but simply a knighthood, under the same name, a sort of militant feudalism, entirely different from its original form. Therefore we must not picture royalty as drawing its sword in its weakness, as boldly attacking the feudal giant, and overthrowing it amid the applause of the country it had delivered. Many books are filled with romances of that sort, which have no place in history.

The same mistake, though it is more serious, is made with regard to royal power as with regard to the communes, when it is represented, like the communes, as the generating and controlling force of the movement which despatched feudalism. The mistake is more serious in this case, because the allegation is still less true of royalty than of the communes. The first successful efforts which royalty made to emancipate itself in its turn from the feudal system, after the vassals, the serfs, and the artisans had freed themselves, did not take place until the double approach of chivalry and the communes, a characteristic and momentous event, was unmistakably evident. The first king, indeed, who is pointed out as having originated some successful movements against feudalism, very modest though they were, was Louis VI., surnamed the Fat. No one will deny the insignificance of the reigns of the Capetians up till that time, and especially the apathy and fruitlessness of the long reign of Philip I., the immediate predecessor and father of Louis VI. The latter was joint ruler in 1100; he was twenty-five, but he did not really become king till the death of his father in 1108. Now, by the year 1108 a large number of the towns of the South had already been emancipated for some time: they were emancipated, as we saw, before the northern towns. And these northern towns had already had their communes for a quarter of a century. The commune of Le Mans was proclaimed as early as 1073, that of Cambrai in 1076, that of Noyon in 1098 in all probability, when Baudri of Sarchainville was elected bishop, a man who had good reason to be popular, who was the declared partisan of the communal institution, and was not content with accepting it in his episcopal town, but busied himself in getting it thoroughly established there. Then came the commune of Saint-Quentin, about 1102, and of Beauvais a few years before 1108. Chivalry,

too, had begun before this time to devote itself to distant expeditions in the four corners of the world: from Southern Italy in 1037 and Sicily in 1058, to Great Britain in 1066; and from Portugal in 1094 to Palestine in 1096. Thus the communal movement had made great strides, and the degeneration of the feudal lords was far advanced when royalty took the first steps towards regaining its position.

Moreover, it may not be out of place here to observe that it was already a very long time since the first of the Capetians had come to the throne, and so far they had scarcely made any progress at all. The accession of the third race of kings is sometimes represented as a regeneration of the royal power after the decay of the Carlovingians. Now, in the year 1108 two centuries—and that is a considerable time—had elapsed since the ancestors of the Capetians had first ascended the throne, beginning with Eudes (887–98), Robert I. (922–23), Raoul (923–36); and it was a hundred and twenty-one years since Hugh Capet had remained without a rival and had brought about the final enthronement of the dynasty (987).

What had the royal power achieved in all that time?

During its first century—that is to say, from the accession of Eudes, who succeeded the Emperor Charles the Fat in 887, up to the accession of Hugh Capet in 987—the royal power had still been regarded with some distrust by the feudatories who had amused themselves by setting the family of the future Capetians and that of the Carlovingians against one another, with the object of keeping the royal power in a state of powerlessness, and of hindering the valiant counts of Paris, the dukes of France, from renewing the attempt of Pepin the Short and of Charlemagne. That is the explanation of the constant passages of arms which went on between the ancestors of the Capetians and the Carlovingian kings for the whole of that century. It is a curious fact that the descendants of Charlemagne, after the loss of almost all their possessions, and even of their town of Laon, at times, should have been the sport of the lords of that period, and that the dukes of France, who then counted among the richest feudatories, should have hesitated to occupy the throne, through fear of being in their turn obliged to despoil themselves to keep the lords, their rivals, on friendly terms as the Carlovingians had been forced to do. Their hesitation

comes out only too clearly in history: they were as ready to abandon the title of king as they were to take or receive it; they left it to one of their brothers-in-law, Raoul, Duke of Burgundy; and Hugh the Great, the father of Hugh Capet, himself revived and cherished the last phantoms of the kings descended from Charlemagne, with the persistency of an astute politician.

After royalty had been rendered completely powerless for a hundred years, none of the great feudal lords felt any interest in its fate, and it became possible for Hugh Capet to venture to take the crown without any of them making a disturbance or molesting him. That was the beginning of the second century of the rule of the Capetians: they had spent the whole of the first century in waiting till royalty had been reduced to a state of complete insignificance in order definitely to take the place the Carlovingians had held.

During the second century—or rather, for a hundred and twenty years, from the accession of Hugh Capet in 987 till the reign of Louis VI. in 1108—the kings did what was undoubtedly the best for their future prospects: they allowed the royal title to lapse completely, so that they no longer excited the jealousy of those lords who were undoubtedly more powerful than themselves—as, for instance, the dukes of Normandy, the dukes of Aquitaine, and the counts of Toulouse. Those great feudal lords, who, moreover, took little enough trouble about paying homage to the king, did not find it a bad thing after all to "be dependent" upon someone who was far less powerful than themselves. The object they had had in view in maintaining the slothful Carlovingian kings could still be realised under the modest or inactive Capetians—namely, that they should have a suzerainty which did not inconvenience them and upon which they could lean, in time of need, for their own advantage.

There can be no doubt that if the first Capetians had wanted to play the part of Pepin the Short or of Charlemagne, and head feudalism and keep it in check, the history of the Carlovingian decadence would have repeated itself. Feudalism, so long as it was threatened, would have kept up all the strength and rigour of its organisation in order to carry on the struggle against the royal power in which it had never been worsted or withdrawn a single step. Those two long centuries of quiet,

when royal domination had been completely nullified, inspired the feudatories with confidence that it was safe to relax the bonds between them and separate from each other in order to gain a more complete freedom, which nothing any longer menaced. That is the reason, which is too often overlooked, of the very divergent lines taken by the history of the second and third dynasties. That is the key to the difference of the fate of the Carlovingians and that of the Capetians.

Thus, for more than two centuries the Capetian kings did nothing which could give them a claim to the royal title: the power of the kings had remained completely annulled.

We shall understand the situation still more thoroughly if we examine what the Capetians did during those two centuries in their quality of lords on their own estates. Their estates were those manorial lands which have been significantly called "lands *within the king's dominions*," the rest of the kingdom being officially designated as "lands *outside the king's dominions*." It was difficult to describe the real state of the royal power more plainly than by those two terms.

The Capetians passed through exactly the same phases upon their manorial estates as the other lords. They saw the feudal bonds relaxed between themselves and the people on their estates. So that it is not at all surprising to find that, at the time of the accession of Louis VI.,—that is to say, at the beginning of the twelfth century,—the king was surrounded even on his own lands by vassals who were merely subject to him and nothing more. He could not even go away from Paris in any direction, for however short a distance, were it only to Montmorency, unless it was their good pleasure; and they were often capricious about giving their consent.

The history of the first Capetians in their quality of lords is certainly one of the most interesting that can be studied, because it exhibits a continuous series of pictures of feudal life during that much-ignored period, in which feudalism went through the evolution that led to its destruction. It is the consecutive and enlightening history of a manorial domain and of an uninterrupted line of lords which is of the highest value as affording information about a singularly interesting and decisive period. The authors of general histories of France make a great mistake in almost entirely excluding from their

books the history of the first Capetians, as if it were of little value. It is true that from the point of view of a history of kings it is of no worth, but it throws a myriad of sidelights upon the manorial life. It gives the real history of that time in the monography of a family, by revealing in one clear example the social system, which was the fount of action.

I have only room here to give a rough sketch of the Capetians in their capacity of feudal lords, swept along as they were by the natural movement of feudalism like everyone else.

The tenth century is the period when the vassals gradually loosened the bonds which bound them to their suzerains. Now, what history can better reflect the situation than that of Hugh Capet, Duke of France, at the time when he took the title of king and found the lords, the direct vassals of the crown, quietly shut up in their independence and entirely oblivious of their duties, and even of their rights as great feudatories ?

During the early part of the eleventh century this independence and isolation is manifested in the thoroughly domestic life led by the lord : now, what history illustrates that kind of life better than the history of Robert the Pious, that peace-loving, charitable man, with his leaning towards the intellectual and the mystical, who delighted in setting everything in order, even the popular ceremonies, in which he went before the procession and caused way to be made for it ; who allowed the golden ornaments on his clothing to be stolen by the poor, to whom he gave free access ; who was a pupil of Gerbert and loved books, took them about with him on his journeys, had a talent for singing, and was one of the choristers in the Abbey of St. Denis ; who supported monastic reform ; who caused criminals to be prepared for death, and pardoned them after they had been brought to repentance ; who, however, carried on a successful war, chiefly against the Duke of Burgundy, in order to maintain his rights ; who brought back his rebellious son to obedience by force of arms ; who was sternly just, even to excess ? Such is the true type of the feudal landowner in the first years of the eleventh century, who desires peace without fearing war, takes a delight in the things of everyday life, and only fights when he believes it unavoidable.

The second half of the eleventh century saw the awakening of the towns, especially in the South, under the influence of

industry and commerce, which caused the advance of arts and an increase of luxury. Now, who felt the effect of that movement so much as Philip I. ? He married a wife from the South, and was straightway overwhelmed by a crowd of frivolous people, of Southerners, who had no knowledge of anything but festivals, pleasures, extravagant fashions, and costly novelties ; and his careless and idle life is characteristic of the useless existence to which the feudal lord turned as soon as freedom and prosperity developed in the world around him.

Finally, have we not observed how, at the end of the eleventh century, the lords abandoned an idle life, which did not give scope for their energies, and devoted themselves to chivalrous exploits ? Now, what represents this phase of history better than the figure of Louis VI., the lover of sword-play, who was full of chivalrous ideas of doing justice, of redressing wrongs in all places, and who emerged suddenly from the apathy in which Philip I. had slumbered away his days ?

To sum up : while feudalism was disappearing, royalty remained inactive, and those who bore the purely nominal title of king were, as a matter of fact, mere lords, who simply passed through the series of evolutions common to all the feudatories.

But when feudalism was thoroughly rooted out and took the form of chivalry—that is to say, in the twelfth century—the royal power reappeared. How ? This is the manner of it :

It acquired the control of everything which in turn escaped from feudalism.

We shall now see how that came about.

The first act by which the Capetians increased their power was the resumption of their own manorial estate, part of which had slipped from their hands when the vassal's bonds became relaxed. Everyone knows—and I mentioned it above—that before the reign of Louis VI. their position had become so straitened that they could not guard the public peace round Paris without coming into contact with the sometimes formidable power of the country squires, who were very much inclined to pillage the convoys of merchants and the property of the Church. How did they succeed in getting out of that humiliating position ?

They extricated themselves from it by putting themselves at the head of the people who had been the first to emancipate themselves from feudalism: the inhabitants of the ecclesiastical domains—that is to say, of the lands belonging to the bishopric or the abbey. Emancipation had taken place earlier in these lands, where there was often more prosperity than elsewhere, as the result of a more regular administration. Neighbouring lords were tempted to make raids upon them when driven by necessity. It was not permitted the bishops and abbots to conduct war in person because of their position in the Church, and they could not, without running the risk of finding themselves duped in one way or another, intrust the command to a willing lord. They had, therefore, decided to intrust a leader, drawn from the actual staff of the bishopric or abbey and possessing no feudal title, with the command of their tenants, who were quite willing to defend themselves and their holdings with might and main. A contrivance of that sort was quite outside the regular feudal organisation. It was the first institution which the king offered to protect and support.

It was in this way that Louis VI. acquired the leadership of the troops of the Abbey of St. Denis, and of those of other ecclesiastical domains in the "Isle of France" or in Orléanais. According to the custom of the time, he became the "knight" of that cause. With the aid of these troops, which were composed of the sons of freed serfs, who were impelled by their natural simplicity to contribute more military service than the strict rules and formal obligations of feudalism demanded, Louis VI. began to recall to submission or mercilessly to destroy those of the vassals on his manorial estate who had made themselves entirely free or utterly unbearable. This first alliance has remained famous in history owing to the custom which the kings of France preserved from that time of going to St. Denis before starting on military expeditions in order to take command of the army and raise in their hand the oriflamme of the abbey which lay on the altar of the church.

All this had only to do with the land "within the king's dominions."

But the king soon found means to take under his command another class of people in the lands "outside his

dominions," namely, the communes. That was a great step in advance.

The king was very far from being a partisan of the communes either from a conviction of their social advantages or on principle, and took care, in the first instance, not to sanction any of them in any part of his domains. He took the precaution of making an agreement with the towns in his dependency that they should be only "burgess towns," endowed with civil liberties, but without political autonomy. That is the first and not the only instance in which the king himself gives the lie to historians who have taken it into their heads to call him the "Father of the Communes."

"Paris never had a commune," Augustin Thierry says decisively, "but merely corporations of tradesmen, and law courts held by burgesses without any political powers. Orleans attempted to form itself into a commune under Louis the Young, but 'the madness of those dawdlers,' as it is expressed in the Chronicles of Saint Denis, 'who, for the sake of the commune, made as if they would rebel and rise against the crown,' was punished by a military execution and other stringent measures." [1] It was the same all over the royal domain.

But even with regard to the communes which were formed to the detriment of the lords in the lands outside his dominion, the king was very undecided, and consequently changed his mind as to the attitude it would be most advantageous to himself to adopt towards them.

In the first place, how was it that he was asked to interfere with them?

The communes seemed like a great anomaly in the heart of the feudal system. Therefore those who founded them, whether artisans who had revolted or benevolent lords, felt the need of an official guarantee, and of making them formally recognised institutions in the feudal system—unless it was a question of some country which was particularly left to itself, like Normandy, which was almost a kingdom, or like Flanders, which was neutralised, so to speak, between its allegiance to the kings of France and its allegiance to the emperors of Germany. At Noyon the seigneurial bishop thought it a good plan to demand of his suzerain, the king, that he should ratify the commune which

[1] *Lettres sur l'Histoire de France*, letter xiii.

he had generously granted the town. At Laon, on the contrary, it was the people of the commune who took the precaution, in view of the opposition of their bishop, of getting their constitution recognised by the chief of the feudal system, the king. And so it happened elsewhere, sometimes in one way, sometimes in another.

The king was thus obliged to take a part in the communal movement, but it was not of his own doing.

Now, compelled as he was to take a part in it, what did he do? The history of the Commune of Laon will tell us. It is one of the most celebrated, one of the communes which people are pleased to quote in evidence of Louis VI.'s paternal solicitude for the communes. It is only one instance of a constantly recurring fact.

The inhabitants of Laon had bought with silver the permission of their bishop to form a commune. They sent costly presents to the king at Paris in order to obtain his sanction. There was no sort of hesitation in the answer they received: *compulsus est et rex largitione plebeiâ id jurejurando firmare* was Guibert de Nogent's simple statement of the matter.

Three years after, in 1112, the bishop repented of his concession, and took the opportunity of a visit of Louis VI. to Laon to request him to withdraw the sanction he had given as suzerain. "The king's councillors at first raised some difficulties, for the burgesses of Laon had got wind of the plot, and had offered them 400 pounds of silver, and more, if they demanded it, if they would support the commune. The bishop then found himself obliged to outbid these offers and promise 700 pounds. Whereupon the king was prevailed upon to take part against the liberty of the town. On the morning of the next day, at daybreak, he set out in great haste with all his following." [1]

For two hundred years of its frequently interrupted existence, the Commune of Laon did nothing but buy the king's approbation periodically in this way.[2]

The Commune of Amiens likewise purchased its confirma-

[1] Guibert de Nogent, quoted by Aug. Thierry, *Lettres sur l'Histoire de France*, letter xvi.

[2] See Aug. Thierry, *ibid.*

tion from the king: *Ambiani, rege illecto pecuniis, fecerunt Communiam* (Guibert de Nogent). And so on.

There is no doubt that the king simply saw in the confirmation of these communes an opportunity of claiming as suzerain a grant of money from the enriched artisans who were willing to pay for their liberty, just as if he were himself the direct overlord.

So the royal power was not, as has been believed, much extended by the communes in this the first stage of their formation: the only way in which they affected the king was to make his opinion of some importance and bring him financial support. It was not till later that the actual officers of the communes came to recruit the king's military and administrative forces.

However, thanks to the money the king derived from these appeals for his intervention as suzerain, he found means to get a firmer footing outside his own domain: he enrolled another group of people who had no regular place in the feudal system: I mean the "bands of highwaymen."

It was with their help that King Philip Augustus took possession of Normandy after having, as nominal suzerain, announced to John Lackland, King of England, his intention of confiscating it. Attention must be drawn to the fact that the king's suzerainty would have remained as practically ineffective as it had been in the past, had he not been able to employ in succession the means of execution which escaped from the feudal system in its period of dissolution.

"At the end of the twelfth century," says Boutaric, professor at the École des Chartes, "highwaymen acquired a new importance and played a great part in the military operations which distinguished the reign of Philip Augustus. The king hired them for his war against the King of England. It is recorded in history how a famous chief named Cadoc did him good service. Cadoc's band was the first to make its way into Château Gaillard. It subsequently took possession of the town of Angers. But, under a man of the character of Philip Augustus, the highwaymen were obliged to give up their wild habits: they became brave soldiers who were kept under control by stern discipline and were content with the rich pay they received." [1]

[1] *Institutions militaires*, bk. iv. chap. iv. p. 242.

By this conquest of Normandy, which was accompanied by that of Maine, Anjou, Touraine, and Poitou, the Capetian kings actually became the most powerful persons in France. It was then that royalty, in the person of Philip Augustus, reassumed the power to which the Carlovingians had aspired, the domination of the lords, the government of the kingdom. But Philip Augustus had no longer to struggle like Pepin and Charlemagne against feudalism in its vigour: it was already a century and a half since chivalry had absorbed all the nobility. It was disorganised by its adventures, ruined by its distant expeditions, and decimated by its deeds of valour.

So the aim pursued by the king was, not to reorganise the lords in any way he could, but to replace them in all places where he could by men drawn from the population that was growing up in the towns, which provided him with a new class quite outside the organisation of the estate and the feudal system, a class which was very ambitious, very much flattered at being promoted by the king, the highest representative of feudalism at that time; and lastly, owing to their municipal and communal habits, very much prone to return to communal ideas and communal ways.

The population of the towns furnished the king with *soldiers* and *officials*, the two great categories of agents which were the effective instruments of his power.

His first step was to get the towns under his control.

He took care at first not to abolish the communes in places where he came across them outside his ancient domain, but he generally doubled the dues they had promised to the preceding lords;[1] and when they could not pay, he suppressed them, and brought the inhabitants under the royal administration. It was an easy thing to do, as in such cases the towns were not rich and flourishing, and the king had become strong owing to his conquests in the interior. The king also showed a great deal of dexterity in profiting by the dissensions which were sure to occur in the communal government of the freed towns to make one of the parties engaged in the struggle come to his support, by granting it honours and material advantages, and help him in suppressing the commune; he then placed his own agents at the head of the town.[2]

[1] See Leber, *Histoire du pouvoir municipal*, p. 183. [2] *Ibid.* p. 375.

Thus, from the time of Philip Augustus, the communes began to disappear in great numbers, and at any rate were not usually recognised, unless at the cost of a great increase in their taxes and dues.

Among the duties which the communes were bound to accept—and which they accepted, it must be said, with rather unaccountable pride—was the obligation to send their militias to the king's army.

We know how well those militias served at Bouvines. But though they were victorious, they showed that they were very inexperienced. That was remedied by giving them the ordinary military training—practising them in shooting with the bow, for example—and by choosing from among them the finest men and those best skilled in fighting to form picked bodies or "companies." The king supplied these picked bands with officers. Except at times set aside for practice, or in cases of mobilisation, he had the arms kept under the charge of the officers, for fear, it was said, that the artisans should pawn them one day for purposes of trade.

With the help of troops, with the pecuniary aid he drew from the towns and from the increasing amount of land which he could really consider under his rule, the king defeated the lords one after the other, as favourable opportunities occurred.

He had one mode of dealing with the lords which throws some light on history. It is often said: "The king declared that henceforth the lords should do this or that; might no longer do this or that—for instance, recognise the communes, create burgesses without the king's consent; might not fight against each other; nor levy new taxes upon their people, etc." And one asks how the lords came to obey. It is evident that they did not obey from a spirit of submission. But, in order to issue these prospective laws, the king gathered round him those lords whom he had been able to win to his side in one way or another, and those who were naturally in sympathy with his projects. They carried out of their own accord what they decided at the king's council. But the king proceeded with the introduction of the new custom by imposing it by degrees on the other lords by force of arms according as favourable opportunities occurred.

At these impromptu meetings of the lords, which were sum-

moned and presided over by the king, men accustomed to business, usually from among the rich burgesses of the towns, were called in to give their advice upon what was the best edict to be issued and what was the best organisation to adopt in view of the end desired. They were there in the position of privy-councillors.

Little by little, the king and those lords who acquiesced in the king's intentions abandoned to these men the task of discussing by themselves and of deciding the measures to be adopted for attaining the object which had been pointed out to them. That was the origin of the king's councillors, the legists, and the parliaments.

The lords willingly allowed individual emissaries to be sent by the king to their estates to represent this body of lawyers and to commute those sentences pronounced by the seigneurial judges which were not in accordance with the decisions made by this central body of magistrates. That was the origin of the royal bailiffs and royal provosts, who before long were sent at the command of the king even to the lands of lords who did not wish to have them. This centralised organisation of justice, which was supported by the king's military forces, was not long in absorbing the whole judicial administration and in gradually excluding from the field the manorial law courts, which, by the way, it must not be forgotten hardly belonged directly to the lords any more, but were generally let out in fief.

The distinctive feature of the two offices created by the king—that of the officer of militia and of the legal councillor—was that they assumed a purely personal character. In the case of the militia and the companies of burgesses, the military offices remained transitory, were attached to no land, no estate, no line of heirs—an arrangement which was in direct opposition to the feudal organisation. It was the same with the judicial and administrative offices. From the very beginning it was an established rule that the royal bailiffs, royal provosts, and other functionaries of the same kind, should never be chosen from among the people of the place where they had to perform their duties, and that they should not occupy the same post for more than three years. I will quote a characteristic example of the precautions that were taken: "No

one shall be provost or bailiff of the said town (Montauban) or lieutenant thereof, who is a native of the said place or its dependencies, or who has taken a wife thereof, or else is an inhabitant thereof. (In the year 1332.)"

What a change from the time when the Frankish landlords assembled to obtain a decree from the Merovingians that no judge should be chosen from people outside the country who possessed no property therein!

So we have the king side by side with a rich and intelligent town population, who were reconciled to the communal idea and were trained to commercial speculations and industry. We find that royalty has reverted to something very much like the military and administrative system of the Merovingians, to a government entirely in the king's hands, composed of persons whom he takes or leaves according as he thinks they may be of use, but who are nothing in themselves, and in nowise depend on the possession and development of an estate.

Further on we shall resume this history of the royal power. We shall leave off for the present in the fourteenth century with Philip the Fair, whose character is well known and is highly typical of the times.

It remains for us to explain how it was impossible for the serfs who had been emancipated upon their estates to react against the movement towards the centralisation of the administration and the domination of the king, which were both fundamentally dependent upon the recruits provided by the town populations.

But before going so far—that is, before reaching modern times—we must gain some knowledge of a large portion of the Frankish and feudal lands that we have passed by: our next chapter will deal with feudalism in Germany.

CHAPTER XXII

THE NEW GERMANISATION OF CENTRAL EUROPE IN THE MIDDLE AGES

NOW that we have traced the history of the particularist form of society in Great Britain and in France up to the decadence of feudalism, let us follow it in Germany during the same period.

Central Europe — that is to say, the vast quadrilateral bounded by the Baltic, the Vistula, the Danube, and the Rhine — was all but emptied of all the Germanic peoples by the pressure of the great migratory movement known as the invasion of the barbarians.[1] They pressed on, tribe upon tribe, to the Roman lands beyond the Danube and the Rhine, so that at the beginning of the sixth century no Germans were left in the centre of Europe except the five following groups of peoples:[2]

1. The Saxons of the Saxon plain: they were, as we know, the Neo-Germans from the steep fiords of Norway. The Franks and the Saxons of Britain came from among them. They belonged to the particularist form of society. They were firmly fixed to the land; they sent out emigrants, but did not remove in a body: they won fresh land without abandoning their own. This was the characteristic which distinguished them from the other peoples of Central Europe at the time of the great barbarian invasion, and which was due to the fact that their peculiar method of family organisation gave rise directly to a peculiar method of expansion in the race.

Their own territory was the flat land called by their name,

[1] See *Atlas*, Vidal-Lablache, map 18*a*.

[2] The following points will be easily grasped with the help of the three maps, 18*d*, 25, and 97*e* in *Atlas*, Vidal-Lablache (Armand Colin, Paris).

the Saxon plain, the centre of which was formed by the lower basin of the Weser. The land was bounded on the north by the North Sea; on the west by the marshes of Bourtange, the present frontier of Holland, by the Rhine and its tributary the Sieg near Bonn; on the south by the mountain chain in the upper basin of the Weser; lastly, on the east by the Unstrut, a tributary of the Saale, by the Saale, which is a tributary of the Elbe, and by the Elbe itself.[1]

The Saxons, then, occupied the *north-eastern corner of Central Europe.*

2. The Eastern Franks, later known as the *Franconians*: they were the Franks who settled in the valley of the Main as well as in Gaul.[2]

3. The *Alemanni*: they were a chance medley, a fusion, a confederation if you will, of Old Germans. The Suevi, from whom came the name of Swabians, formed the predominating element of the group, which therefore bore the name of Alemanni or Swabians at different times, in a very confusing manner. In accordance with the strange destiny which haunts historical and geographical names, the first of these names has been extended so as to include all the peoples of Central Europe: the Germans (Allemands). The Suevi were, it will be remembered, the principal tribe among the Old Germans of the Baltic plain: they occupied the whole area between the Elbe and the Oder, the importance of which is proved more markedly than ever by the fact that Berlin is situated at its centre.[3] According to Cæsar, they were the most warlike of all the inhabitants of Germany: "*Suevorum gens est longe bellicosissima Germanorum omnium.*"[4] It was not long before they entered the stream of the great invasion: they formed part of the first body of Gauls which crossed the Rhine and poured in upon Gaul on December 31, 406. They pushed as far as Spain, where they made an ephemeral kingdom in the north-west, in the region now known as Galicia, which is, however, very much larger at the present day. They did not all leave Central Europe, however, for they were incomparably the largest settlement of Germans; they occupied, it is said, a hundred villages, from each of which a thousand men were

[1] See map 94, *Atlas*, Vidal-Lablache.
[2] See maps 21 and 25, *ibid.*
[3] See above, Chap. I. p. 6.
[4] *De Bello Gallico*, iv. 1.

sent out to war every year: *gens longe maxima Germanorum omnium, hi centum pagos habere dicuntur, ex quibus quotannis singula millia armatorum bellandi causā ex finibus educunt.*[1] Those of the Swabian tribe who remained behind in Germany reinforced the tribes which had been established for a long time near the Rhine, and they all took a name which they had already made famous, that of Alemanni, meaning in Teutonic *wholly men.* This band of Alemanni made a fresh attempt to cross the Rhine. But it was too late: no sooner had they crossed the river than they saw coming out against them the Franks of Clovis, who had made themselves masters of Gaul, and, like true particularists, had no intention of surrendering their land. The fight took place at Tolbiac (Zulpich, to the west of Bonn) in 495. The issue is well known. The Alemanni had to terminate their migrations at the right bank of the Rhine. Had they not suffered that celebrated defeat, they too would have emptied Germany. The Franks followed up their victory, and pushed them to the south of the valley of the Main, which was already in the hands of the Franks. That valley was afterwards given the name of Franconia, which has continued to this day.

So the Alemanni or Swabians found themselves restricted to the land called Franconia, on the right bank of the Rhine, south of the Main valley, which remained in the hands of the Franks. They were made *tributary tribes.* Roughly speaking, their land included what is now the duchy of Baden, Würtemberg, and the eastern part of Bavaria, which is still called Swabia.[2] It stretched from the Rhine to the Lech, a river in Augsburg, which is a tributary of the Danube, and embraced the valley of the Neckar and that of the Upper Danube.

Thus the Alemanni occupied the *south-west corner of Central Europe.*

I said that the north-west was occupied by the Saxons. In the space between these two extremes, but north of the valley of the Main, where lived the Franks or Franconians, dwelled the Thuringians.

4. The *Thuringians* were a medley of Old Germans who had fled to the mountainous country about the sources of the

[1] *De Bello Gallico*, iv. 1.

[2] See maps 97 and 98, *Atlas*, Vidal-Lablache.

Weser, between the Saxon plain and the valley of the Main, or Franconia. Towards the beginning of the sixth century they were joined by a contingent of Angles, who, instead of crossing over to Great Britain, had followed the general southerly movement, and by the Wagrians, a tribe that lived close to the Angles in Schleswig-Holstein.[1] In an intestine quarrel the Thuringians called in the help of Theodoric, or Thierry I., son of Clovis, but when they refused to give him the share of the booty they had promised, Thuringia was reduced to the position of a *tributary* state by the arms of the Franks.

It thus formed a kind of "buffer state" between the Franks of the Main valley and the Saxons of the Saxon plain. It is represented to-day by the countries of Hesse and Thuringia.[2]

5. The *Bavarians*: they were another medley of Old Germans, the remains, no doubt, of those who had gone south one after the other into Bavaria in order to plunge into Roman territory either on the Gaulish or the Italian side: in fact, the last halting-place on the great road formed by the upper basin of the Danube, which is the boundary of both countries, was in that region. These Old Germans who had mingled with or taken the place of an old Celtic population, a remnant of the Boïans, probably borrowed from them their collective name of *Boioarii* or *Baiuarii*, Bavarians. When the Franks were strengthening their settlement in Franconia they made them into a separate body in Bavaria, to the east of the valley of the Main, and made them *tributaries*, as they had done in the case of the Alemanni and the Thuringians.

Thus the Bavarians remained on both banks of the Upper Danube from the Lech, upon which Augsburg is situated, to the Inn, where Passau stands. That country is now called the Upper Palatinate of Bavaria, Lower Bavaria, and Upper Bavaria.[3]

In short, the only Germans who were left in Central Europe

[1] The original country of the Angles, Angeln, was the large round promontory to the north of the present town of Schleswig, and the original country of the Wagrians was Wagria, in the great promontory stretching to the east of Kiel. See maps 98 and 99 in *Atlas*, Vidal-Lablache, or, better still, map 28 in Hachette's *Atlas Manuel*, 1883.

[2] See map 97*e*, *Atlas*, Vidal-Lablache.

[3] See maps 98 and 99, *ibid.*

at the beginning of the sixth century, at the end of the great invasion of the barbarians, were the following :

I. Neo-Germans, belonging to the particularist formation : (1) the Saxons, in the Saxon plain ; (2) the eastern Franks, afterwards called Franconians, in the valley of the Main.

II. Old Germans, belonging to the communal formation : (1) the Alemanni or Swabians, south of the valley of the Main ; (2) the Thuringians, north of the valley of the Main and between it and the Saxon plain ; (3) the Bavarians, to the east of the valley of the Main in the upper basin of the Danube, from the Lech to the Inn.

The Saxons and the Franks had remained where they were owing to their power of holding firmly to the soil.

The Alemanni, Thuringians, and Bavarians had been checked and restricted by the Franks.

It is easy to get an idea of the limits of the areas described above, if it is realised that all the Germanic tribes, Neo-Germans and Old Germans, were shut in by the following boundaries : on the north, the North Sea ; on the west, the Rhine ; on the east, the Elbe, and the Saale, which flows into it south of Magdeburg, the mountains of Bohemia (the Böhmer Wald), and the Inn, which flows into the Danube at Passau ; on the south, the Alps, which rejoin the Rhine.[1]

In short, all Germany was then comprised between two lines : the line of the Rhine, and a line drawn from the Elbe and the Saale to the Alps. How much it had been narrowed since the period before the great invasion of the barbarians ! How different from the time when Germany stretched as far as the Vistula at the very least.

Who, then, had come to fill up the great space which the Germans had evacuated between the Elbe and the Saale and the Vistula, and between the Baltic and the Balkans ? The Slavs and Fins—that is to say, patriarchal tribes.

The Slavs occupied the whole area except the middle and lower basin of the Danube, which was filled by relays of Fins under the names of Huns, Avars, and Hungarians. The Slavs carried on a very elementary kind of farming, but the Fins were purely nomadic—facts which account in some degree

[1] See map 94, *Atlas*, Vidal-Lablache.

for the way in which they naturally divided those two ancient districts of Germany between them.

At the time of the Merovingians, these Slavs and Fins, who had already made their way into Germany, were not tributaries of the Franks, but were merely neighbours of the Alemanni, Bavarians, and Thuringians, who were tributaries of the Franks. They were also neighbours of the Saxons, who were independent of the Franks.[1]

Such was the state of Central Europe from the end of the invasion of the barbarians till the time of Charlemagne. How far behind Gaul, which had almost reached the zenith of feudalism under Charlemagne! It ought also to be remarked that the tributaries of the Franks who had been kept in a state of dependence by the royal power, and not by Frankish colonisation, regained their independence at the time of the Merovingian decadence.

The backwardness of Central Europe relatively to Gaul or France, is a point which is characteristic of the differences in their history.

We shall now consider its results.

As soon as the German tribes of Central Europe ceased to feel the effects of the royal power under the decadent Merovingians, they began to menace Gaul. Thence arose the constant wars which Charlemagne had to wage before he could repair the work of the Merovingians, and before he could, with the help of the great feudal barons, extend it and make it far stronger than before.

He suppressed the national chiefs and the autonomous political organisations of the Old Germans, the Alemanni, Thuringians, and Bavarians, and set a count over each *pagus* (in Latin) or *gau* (in Teutonic), which corresponds with the somewhat small geographical and ethnographical areas which are still called to-day in everyday language "pays" or "canton," such as the Pays de Caux or the Pays d'Auge, the Canton des Grisons or the Canton de Berne. The *pagi* that were considered too small were joined together; others that were too large were divided. In fact, the Merovingian system of organisation was applied to the country, by which the count, who was appointed directly by the king but was subject to dismissal,

[1] See maps 22 and 23, *Atlas*, Vidal-Lablache.

was placed over each *pagus*. But thereby the Old Germans who remained in Germany became subjects instead of being merely tributaries. Their country was annexed to the kingdom of France.

Now, it was about three hundred years since that system had been applied to Gaul by the Merovingians. Thus, when Central Europe reached this new stage in its social advance, it was three hundred years behind France as regards its historical development.

As for the Slavs and Fins who had come into Old Germany, Charlemagne imposed a tax upon them, at any rate upon those that were nearest: the Slavs as far as the Oder, the Fins or Avars as far as the Theiss. So from ordinary neighbours they became tributaries.

As for the Saxons who began to make armed invasions into Frankish territory, Charlemagne made valiant efforts to hold them in check by defeating them in battle and making them swear oaths to maintain peace, but in the end he resorted to a method of extermination on a terrific scale, either executing the people *en masse*, or transplanting them systematically to different parts of his empire. In this way the population of the Saxon plain was extraordinarily reduced, and Charlemagne organised it under counts, as he had done in the case of the Old Germans, with this very curious difference, that the new "counties" were mainly ecclesiastical—that is to say, were intrusted specially to bishops. Bishops in that position had a double advantage over the ordinary counts. On the one hand, their authority was coupled with their religious function and seemed to emanate from it: for that reason it was more acceptable than that of the secular Frankish officials in the eyes of the Saxons who had been independent till then. On the other hand, the bishoprics could not be inherited, and the royal power intervened to choose the bishop every time a see was vacant: by that means Charlemagne had the ultimate management of the affairs of government much more under his control, and had less cause to fear the return of the Saxons to independence than if they had been governed by a line of counts who inherited their offices and were always striving to emancipate themselves. Thus the Saxons became subjects after having been simple neighbours.

In short, at the time of Charlemagne, the Germans (Old Germans and Neo-Germans) of Central Europe were all under the government of counts or of bishops, who were agents for the royal power as under the Merovingian system of government. In the counties called "Marches"—that is to say, frontiers, because they bordered upon the tributary states of the Slavs or Fins—the counts bore the title of margrave or marquis. In the interior counties they were called landgraves or plain counts. It was only in exceptional cases that dukes were created who were put in authority over several counts, bishops, or marquisses.

Thus at the beginning of the Carlovingian epoch the Germans that still remained in Germany, not counting the Franks in the valley of the Main, had only just begun to come under the Merovingian system of government; and it was just at that time that the Merovingians and their mode of government were disappearing from Gaul: which gives us a further idea of the backwardness of the Germans as compared with the Franks. As for the branch of the Slavs and Fins who filled the empty space left by the Germans between the Elbe and the Saale on the one hand and the Oder and the Theiss on the other, they were as yet only bound to pay tribute; but Charlemagne was the very first man to unite all the Old Germans and Neo-Germans that still remained beyond the Rhine under the same political organisation, though he did not conquer the whole of the ancient land of the Germans.

It is easy to realise the inevitable effect of the decadence of the Carlovingians upon the Germans beyond the Rhine. The counts, no matter by whom they were appointed, made themselves independent; feudalism was established in Germany, while in France it was already losing its hold; the great feudatories were beginning to advance towards the height of their power on the right bank of the Rhine, while on the left the emancipation of the serfs and vassals was already diminishing their power.

It should further be remarked that feudalism in Germany came from above—that is to say, originated with the royal functionaries, the counts, who gradually made themselves independent lords over the lands under their jurisdiction—whereas in France feudalism had begun from below, originating from

the spontaneous energy of the landowners, plain private men, who had obtained exemption for their private estates from the intervention of the counts belonging to the Merovingian government.

But before the German counts had had time to make themselves independent, the empire of Louis the Debonnaire was divided, and a German kingdom was formed—that is to say, a separate king was created for the German tribes beyond the Rhine. The new king was one of the sons of Louis the Debonnaire, and owing to his new position was surnamed "the German" (817 and 843). It was about that time that the name of Germany was restored, but not immediately, however, for—and it is very significant—Louis the German took the title of King of the Eastern Franks. Germany was really, as a matter of fact, Eastern France. The Franks had organised it entirely themselves: it was they who had united all the groups of Germans who lived there; it was they who had founded the counties and who gave the country one of their local kings. The Saxons whom Charlemagne had pillaged and massacred remained in the second rank, and the Old Germans of the communal type, the Alemanni, Thuringians, and Bavarians, were easily kept under by the particularist Franks. The Thuringians, besides, were wedged in by their neighbours, the Saxons on one side, and the Franks of the Main on the other, and we shall find that they cease to figure in the great events of the social evolution in Germany.

In 911, when the last of the descendants of the decadent line of Louis the German expired, the throne was left to take care of itself. The counts had taken advantage of the weakness of the king to institute feudalism. The same thing then occurred as had happened in France when the Merovingian line came to an end: one of the great feudal lords took the title of king; but in the case of Germany it happened during the reign of the last of the Carlovingians—that is to say, when France was a whole stage in advance.

It is easy to guess who was the great feudatory who attempted to place the crown on his head: it was the lord who occupied the highest position among the Franks of Main, Conrad, the Duke of Franconia. But he had to dispute his title with the Saxons, who had recovered from their disasters under

the almost autonomous government of their duke. The logical sequence of these historical events is remarkable.

The Saxons had, in fact, been governed by a duke ever since a count, a plain count called Ludolph, had, with a great display of energy, successfully defended the Saxon plain in the time of Louis the German against an attack made by the Normans. Louis had adopted a different policy from Charlemagne's on this point with regard to Saxony, and had placed Count Ludolph over the other counts, both lay and ecclesiastical, in the country. And Ludolph had taken care to make his ducal position hereditary. It was one of his descendants, the heir to his duchy, Henry, called Henry the First, or Henry "the Bird-catcher," who became so powerful as to be able to dispute the crown with the Duke of Franconia and succeed in carrying it off.

The dukes of Saxony, who thus became kings, played the same part in Germany as the Carlovingians played in France; but they began their career just as the Carlovingians finished theirs.

The title of king brought with it the serious disadvantage of obliging them to devote themselves entirely to warfare. Even Charlemagne had been quite unable to escape that evil. In the first place, it was necessary to repress the resistance of the other great feudatories of Franconia, of Bavaria, etc. It was necessary to head the national defence against the Slavs and the Fins. Thus the military profession became the great opening for the Saxons, so much so that they spread from the Elbe and the Danube, where they fought the Slavs and Fins, to the banks of the Po, where they defeated the Lombards, who were constantly engaged in civil wars, and annexed their territory to Germany. The Saxons were too much absorbed in the military operations necessary for defending such a length of frontier to have time to make settlements on the land, to make compact agricultural colonies at any points. The expeditions in which the dukes of Saxony, the kings of Germany, obtained the most support from their Saxons, were above all the victorious incursions. In those expeditions, no matter how rapid they were, the Saxons never failed to find domains here and there of which they could take possession, but they could not settle in large numbers all over a country so as to

found a purely Saxon form of society. Moreover, others were diverted from settling by the large profits they reaped from war, as is proved by the case of the dukes of Saxony themselves. Otho, Henry the Bird-catcher's own son, renounced his duchy of Saxony, or at any rate gave it in fief to Henry Billung, who was one of his main supporters in war, in order to carry on a campaign against the Lombards.

In reward, he won the crown of Lombardy, which he declared to be henceforth completely united to that of Germany. Finally he went south as far as Rome, where Pope John XII. crowned him King of the Romans and Emperor of the West (962) in the same way as Leo III. had crowned Charlemagne. Thus was the imperial title, which had completely foundered and disappeared during the decadence of the Carlovingians, granted for the second time in favour of the Saxon race.

The successors of Otho, who was surnamed the Great, carried on his work. Fifty years after his death, when the emperor, Henry the Holy, died (1024), the riverside countries on the left of the Rhine—that is to say, Lorraine and the kingdom of Arles—had consented to rally to the Crown of Germany, and, consequently, to the Empire. In this way Germany was extended so as to include the valleys of the Meuse and the Moselle, and went as far as the Rhone. The only part of Charlemagne's empire which the German emperors did not hold was the western part, starting from the Escaut, the basin of the Seine and the line of the Rhone—that is to say, France proper, which remained independent.[1]

But the kingship of Germany, with all the titles which were attached to it, had absolutely no reality about it. It was merely an abstract right, which had no foundation in any territory in particular, was attached to no estate, was in no way a hereditary possession, and had no definite point of support anywhere. The royal office had in the main remained elective. As a matter of fact, there is no doubt that, in more than one case, assent was forcibly wrung from the dukes and counts, the vassals of the crown, but it had to be obtained either by force or otherwise: the king could not be invested unless he had their assent. Nor was this custom peculiar to Germany. In France the Capetians of that same period used

[1] See map 25, *Atlas*, Vidal-Lablache.

still to take care to get their successor recognised by vote during their lifetime, and made him share the throne from that time till their death. If they met with no resistance in this method of procedure, the reason was that but little account was taken of their power, and that they contented themselves with being elected merely by the petty vassals of the royal domain. Philip Augustus was the first to trust to the principle of heredity, for he felt that his family had become strong enough to keep him in power without a rival.

The descendants of Henry the Bird-catcher and Otho the Great, in spite of the principle of election, managed to keep the German and Imperial throne till the time of Henry the Holy, who died in 1024. He, however, left no children.

That was an opportunity which the new Saxon dukes, whom Otho the Great had created by giving his duchy in fief to Henry Billung, would have been glad to use for adding to the title they already possessed the royal and imperial title of the first house of Saxony, which thus became extinct. But they had to get themselves elected, and the German feudatories were more anxious than ever about their independence, and were careful to avoid such powerful persons. They preferred to revert to the dukes of Franconia, who had been formerly defeated by the Saxon dukes: they appointed Conrad II.

Thereupon, Saxony went over from the Government to the Opposition: its rôle was reversed, and we shall find it leading the party of resistance to power.

What the decadence of the Carlovingians was in France, the reign of the Franconian emperors, who were elected in succession, was in Germany, only there was an interval of two hundred years in between! The feudatories, whom fear of the power of the kings—so diminished was it—no longer constrained to keep united, gradually emancipated themselves in turn and broke off their connections with one another. Hitherto the counties, and the duchies, which embraced several counties, had remained almost entirely undivided. But from that time the fiefs were constantly split up between the inferior and superior fief-holders or altered to form fresh combinations. So that a hundred years afterwards (1125), when the line of Franconian emperors came to an end, the political map of Germany is unrecognisable. The counties no longer correspond to the

ancient *pagi*; they are broken up and patched together in a thousand different ways. The duchies are sometimes separated into small estates, mere shreds of their ancient territories; they are narrowed, divided, even displaced or multiplied. It was like a view in a kaleidoscope.

It was during this restless period that the famous quarrels between the Franconian emperor, Henry IV., and the pope, Gregory VII., took place. Gregory VII. had relied upon the petty vassals, who were on their way to emancipation, and above all on the Saxons in the Opposition, to overthrow the power of his adversary in the very centre of Germany. He was successful. And when Henry V., the son of Henry IV., died, it was the Duke of Saxony, Lothario, who was made emperor.

But feudal independence had gathered too much strength under the Franconian emperors, owing to the circumstances I have described, to permit of the Saxon dukes being viewed with favour in any guise except that of leaders of the Opposition. People had no longer any desire for powerful emperors; they wanted them less than ever. The movement which had shifted the reins of the imperial government from the Saxons to the Franconians became more marked, and caused the imperial power to be shifted from the Franconians to the Swabians (formerly called Alemanni), when Lothario died without leaving a child.

He had not left Saxony without a duke: he had bequeathed his duchy to his son-in-law. The latter did all in his power to take the lead of Conrad III., Duke of Swabia, who had been elected emperor, but all he succeeded in doing was to get himself banished from the empire and despoiled of his duchy. It was Conrad III.'s intention to establish someone in his place by creating a new family of Saxon dukes.

But Saxony, which had already passed over from the side of the Government to the Opposition, now proceeded to pass to independence by refusing henceforth to have a duke. It rejected Albert the Bear, who was proposed, and every domain, whether it belonged to a count, a bishop, a lord, or even a plain private man, declared itself to be free under the direct and illusory suzerainty of the emperor-elect and no one else. That was about the year 1150. When Saxony had once more regained its local liberty, and had renounced all ideas of imperial

supremacy, it again resumed its quiet domestic life, and made no stir in politics for three centuries.

But though the opening for acquiring booty and winning military glory was in this way closed as far as Saxony was concerned, another opening was made by commerce: this we shall deal with presently, and we shall see that it was not of so much value to Saxony as were the opportunities of acquiring estates in new lands.

The new line of emperors, the house of Swabia, also known as the house of Hohenstauffen, had much the same career in Germany as that of the Capetians had in France. Their power gradually ebbed away, as did that of the Capetians from Eudes to Hugh Capet. And they remained in that powerless condition for some time, as did the successors of Hugh Capet. Then their power increased again, as we shall see. But there is a difference: in Germany all this took place between 1150 and 1300, while in France it took place between 850 and 1100. The one country is always two or three centuries behind the other. With Frederick II. the power of the emperors in Germany reached its lowest pitch; he died in 1250. The peoples of the south, who had before been loyal to the empire, deserted it; the lords took care to elect as emperor only such candidates as had no personal resources to aid them, in order to keep the emperor as powerless as might be. The Holy See had made its suzerainty over the imperial power recognised: the emperor swore an oath of fealty in due form to the pope.

This confused state of things was followed by an "interregnum," which lasted twenty years and was the final triumph of German feudalism.

After the interregnum the imperial power was claimed by a fourth house; the house of Habsburg, as it was first called, but which afterwards became the house of Austria, succeeded those of Saxony, Franconia, and Swabia.

This new house, as we shall see, began the ascent towards power. Rudolph, Count of Habsburg, a castle in Argovie, in Switzerland, Landgrave of Alsacia, Count of Baden and of other places, protector of the cantons of Uri, Schwitz, and Unterwalden, was elected emperor for the very reason that his territorial possessions were so small. But he managed to intervene in the question of the succession to the March (or Mar-

quisate) of Austria, and in the end secured that succession to his posterity. By the acquisition and development of that domain his descendants became powerful enough to revive the power of the German kings after feudalism had spread and then decayed through its own success, as had happened in France.

Let us watch the ascent to power of the new imperial house. The two ancient neighbours and enemies of the Germans, the Slavs and the Fins, had not disappeared while these changes were going on in the interior of Germany. The same spirit of chivalry which had drawn men in France to the east, in Normandy to England, in Spain against the Moors, impelled men in Germany, as was very natural, indeed necessary, to fight against their neighbours the Slavs or the Fins.

There were, therefore, two countries permanently open as fields for chivalry: in the north there was the Baltic plain to be won from the Slavs; in the south the basin of the Danube to be captured from other Slavs or from Fins.

The first conquests in the Baltic plain, just beyond the Elbe, resulted in the formation of a frontier county, or march, called the Northern March or March of Brandenburg. Brandenburg was a religious centre of the Slavs, which was situated in the midst of forests and marshes.

The first conquest in the basin of the Danube (outside Bavaria, be it understood) resulted in the formation of the Eastern or Austrian March. These two "marches" were the embryos of Prussia and Austria respectively.

Those two great states were formed, as we see, in lands that had ceased to be German. They had become Slav or Finnish territory.

The land was so well suited to a race like that of the Slavs and Fins that it was extremely difficult, or rather impossible, for races that had become sedentary, like those of feudal Germany, to settle there except by shutting themselves up inside walls, as is done by agents of commercial firms who settle in the midst of peoples who are perpetually on the move or engaged in making incursions.

When they considered that a piece of land had been conquered, the lords, who carried on these enterprises to suit their own private ends, transported Germans or Alemanni to the

place; but within a short space the natives would return armed, and destroy all the settlements. Everything had to be begun over again. It was decided to build walled towns. The Germans could carry on trade with the newly conquered people with greater security within the walls. Those who settled outside the closed towns, on isolated estates or in unprotected villages, were sure, before long, to become the victims of some raid, some rising, or some other caprice of the natives of the land. In the end, then, German colonisation was effected only by means of walled cities or else of strong manorial castles; which is the same thing as saying that it was brought about not by agriculture, but by war and commerce.

Even when the German emigrants succeeded in securing peace in the conquered country, and were left undisturbed by the natives, they very soon became dissatisfied with rural life: (1) because the mass of the country-people, who were Slavs or Fins, were treated as a conquered race, burdened with taxes, closely watched, governed as if they were far beneath the rulers, and held in contempt, and it was almost inevitable that the Germans who mingled with them should be confounded with them and should soon be put upon the same footing; (2) because it was so easy to make a profit by trading, in the security of the walled towns, in those new countries where industrial arts were unknown, that the Germans who had settled in the country districts were fatally attracted to the towns.

The new colonisation of the Baltic plain and the basin of the Danube by the Germans was therefore achieved in the first instance by commerce, by the foundation of towns, and by military force.

As for the Slav or Finnish population, which was of the pure patriarchal type, it became Germanised in so far as it adopted the language of the conquerors and merchants, became partially incorporated with the German population in the towns, and was obliged, owing to the taxes imposed upon it, to cultivate the land with more persistency, and, as always happens in such cases, to reduce the family community to its lowest terms—that is to say, to groups of two, or at most three, households: that of the father, that of the heir, and perhaps that of some other son who had still to be set up in the world. But the particularist

form of society, with its solitary household, the direct result of the ability to create an independent estate, was hardly ever found among those conquered tribes.

This kind of Germanisation went on in the greater part of Germany—that is, in all parts of the land that lies beyond the Elbe, and the Saale, its tributary, and the Inn, a tributary of the Danube.

But that is not all.

We must not forget that, even in the eastern part of that region,—that is to say, between the Elbe, the Saale, and the Inn on the one hand, and the Rhine on the other,—the greater part of the population belonged to the type of the Old Germans, which was also a communal type. The only families there belonging to the particularist type were those living on the barren lands of the Saxon plain and those who had come to Franconia as Frankish emigrants.

If it be further added that these Saxons and Franconians were attracted, as we have seen, by the prospects of gain to take part in military expeditions into the interior of the lands under German domination during the imperial epoch which we have been studying, we shall understand the military, communal, and urban character presented by the Middle Ages in Germany, in spite of its particularist elements.

We shall understand why there was such a difference between a country of that type and Great Britain, which was colonised through and through by Saxons who were entirely agricultural and completely independent.

Lastly, we shall not be astonished that the populations of the Baltic plain and the basin of the Danube, who were of Slav or Finnish origin and were conquered and assimilated merely by commercial, urban, and military settlements, should have given the lords of the two Marches, the Northern and the Austrian Marches, every facility for establishing the monarchic system in all its vigour over those wide stretches of country.

Now it was not till they had been strengthened by this centralised power and by these vast territorial possessions that the lords ventured to lay hands upon old feudal Germany, where feudalism had, for the matter of that, run its natural course.

Austria was the first to take this step, and for two reasons :

1. Owing to a concatenation of entirely unlooked-for events, an extraordinary number of German principalities had been joined to Austria through inheritances and marriages. Two lines of Latin verse have immortalised this celebrated historical fact :

> " Bella gerant alii ; tu, felix Austria, nube :
> Nam, quæ Mars aliis, dat tibi regna Venus."

2. The purely German, as well as the Slav or Finnish lands in Austrian territory, were far richer than those of the north, which caused the King of Prussia to be called in jest the "*Archi-Grand-Sablier* (sand-box) *d'Allemagne*."

We shall stop for the present at the moment when Austria had created her vast domain and had gained sufficient power over the rest of Germany to enable her to keep the hegemony and make it and the imperial title which she had rendered hereditary the permanent possession of her house.

We shall only add that outside Germany the rivalry of France, who had taken the lead of her in the reconstitution of the centralising monarchic system, and inside Germany the rivalry of Prussia, prevented Austria from achieving, as France did, the complete unification of the country which had before been feudal.

It was our intention to indicate here only the evolution of feudalism in Germany and the return of the monarchic system, as we did before in the case of France. We shall return later on to the full development of monarchy in modern times. We are now going to pause in the middle of the fifteenth century (1438), at the moment when the seat of the German Empire had been definitely established on Austrian territory and the imperial title had been permanently bestowed upon the house of Austria, which had sprung from Rudolph of Habsburg, whose first advance towards power was made, as we saw, in 1273.

Monarchy, with its centralising tendency, was thus established in Germany a century or a century and a half after that of France.

We have hinted that society in Germany tended to be urban in character, not merely owing to its military and administrative colonisation and its communal origin, but also to its commerce. Commerce is the next point we shall investigate in the history of

our particularists, just as we studied industry in connection with the communal movement. We shall then see still more clearly the tendency towards town life which Germany exhibited and the deviation it thereby made from the particularist form of society.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE COMMERCE OF THE FREE TOWNS IN THE MIDDLE AGES

SO far we have watched the changes which the development of agriculture under the feudal system and the revival of industry under the communal or " bourgeois " system brought about in the particularist form of society which was introduced into Gaul and Central Europe by the Franks. We have now to consider from the same point of view how commerce affected that region.

Prior to the prosperity of urban industries, commerce was carried on by means of fairs in the countries where the Frankish system of managing estates prevailed, just as it is still carried on in purely rural districts, since everything, even manufactured articles, came from the country.

The town of Troyes was situated in Champagne, in the upper valley of the Seine, at a point nearing the south to which the Franks, by using the river, could easily bring their produce ; that was the place where they had held their fairs ever since their first settlement in France in the fifth century. It was just at that place that the north, south, and east seemed to meet at a point. The produce of Spain came through Aquitaine ; that of Provence, Lombardy, and Italy through Burgundy ; and that of Eastern France through Austrasia. Troyes formed the centre from which radiated the rivers, the easy lines of transit from one river to another, and the roads through the flat country.

Though the merchant had to overcome great difficulties in his journey to Troyes, owing to the length of the road and the diversity of peoples through whose lands he passed, he had some compensations : for prices were high, because markets were so rare. Besides, it was so manifestly to the advantage of the surrounding countries that that unwonted concourse of buyers

and sellers should take place in their neighbourhood, that every effort was made to facilitate it: all round about, people avoided molesting travellers, and the lords allowed merchandise to pass the tolls free of charge or at reduced rates; by degrees they even tried to secure a safe passage for the traders through all the lands by which they had to come from distant parts.

Once Troyes was reached from the south and the east, it was very easy to go to Paris by simply drifting downstream on the Seine. So it came about that, with the increase of the importance of the Franks and Merovingians, a rival fair to that of Troyes was organised near Paris at St. Denis. It was already started in the time of Dagobert, in 629.

As the needs and facilities of the times increased, the fairs multiplied, but chiefly in the following regions: Champagne and Parisis (*i.e.* the region round Paris). The fairs that were held in Champagne and at or near Paris have remained the most famous.

They became particularly famous in the time of Charlemagne, owing to the way in which the Franks had spread over the land and to the feeling of safety which Charlemagne's name inspired.

Such, then, roughly speaking, was the state of commerce before the birth of urban industries in the country where Frankish influence predominated: it owed its purely rural character to the particularist organisation of society; such was commerce as it existed under the sovereignty of the agricultural domain.

When urban manufacture came to the fore, the inhabitants of the towns obtained liberty and security for their commerce within their walls by emancipating themselves from the domination of the lord by forming various associations, such as communes, municipalities, or associations of burgesses. But what could they do outside their walls? Three obstacles stood in the way of commerce there: (1) the chance *attacks* of armed forces, led by the lords or by bands of adventurers; (2) the *tolls* which the lords levied on everything passing through their estates, like the customs which are now levied by Government; (3) the *bad condition of the roads*: for it is obvious that under a system which encouraged isolated estates, it was no one's interest to keep up the public roads.

In the face of these obstacles, the following were the only resources that were at the disposal of the towns: (1) to use

their militia for retaliating if *attacks* were made on merchants, for the militia was authorised by the charters of enfranchisement to go outside urban territory in such cases; (2) with regard to the *toll dues*, to regulate the taxes by holding them in fief in consideration of a fixed rate to be paid annually to the lords. That was chiefly done in the case of the river tolls; in other cases the towns did not hold the tolls in fief, but obtained the right of free passage by paying the lords vast sums of money either once for all or in several instalments; (3) with regard to the *bad state of the roads*, to conduct their transports by water. It was, besides, the most economical way of transporting merchandise; the transference of goods by land from one river to another could be done in a very short time. Rivers were the only roads used, with the exception of a few remains of Roman roads.

In short, the effect of urban industries on the methods of transport was limited to the development of the boat service.

This boat service subsequently became quite famous on the main rivers and along the seashore.

"Nearly all the commercial societies or societies for organising transports which, under the name of Guilds, or Hanses, or Trading Corporations, were destined to play so brilliant a part in the Middle Ages, were formed during the eleventh and twelfth centuries. It was about that time that the *Hanse of Rouen* must have been formed for the purpose of organising the navigation of the Lower Seine, and the *Parisian Corporation of Traffickers by Water*, the *Companies of Merchants using the river Loire for transport*, and the privileged association of Bordeaux for *Wine-merchants*, for organising the navigation of the Middle Seine, the Loire, and the Garonne respectively. It was also at that time that a corporation of Merchant Sailors of Flemish towns was formed under the name of the *Hanse of London*, for transporting English wool to the Continent.

"All these corporations had the same object, the same character. They were composed of wholesale merchants and shipowners, the owners of small boats or vessels, who formed the upper class of burgesses of the principal trading towns. At Paris the provost—that is to say, the president-elect of the *Traffickers by Water*—became the head of the municipality, the famous *Provost of Merchants*. The *Parlour of the Burgesses*—

that is to say, the headquarters of that association—became the leading hotel of Paris. And the arms of Paris are nothing more than the seal of the *Traffickers by Water*, who as early as the twelfth century adopted a ship as the emblem of their Parisian Hanse. At Rouen the *Hanse of Rouen* became the council of the commune, and provided it with its elective leaders. At Bordeaux it was from the *Wine-merchants*, who were at the same time the shipowners, that the aldermen—that is to say, the urban authorities—came to be chosen. The same things came about in the great Flemish towns and at Saint-Omer." [1]

Though these corporations of merchants and shipowners acquired such celebrity later on, they began on a small scale, and for a long time commerce remained restricted to small areas, because the activity of the towns outside their walls made itself felt at first only in a small sphere owing to the difficulties we mentioned above. (1) The town militia which avenged the attacks made upon the merchants could only go one day's march from the town, and could not carry on a campaign except in expeditions led by the king; it was therefore powerless to protect ordinary commerce outside the town beyond a certain limited radius. (2) The tolls were multiplied to such an extent owing to the want of money experienced by the lords in the period of their decadence, and to the more and more marked separation of the feudal domains across which the merchandise had to be carried, that in many cases it became a complicated matter and a very onerous task for the towns to rent the collection of the tolls on a long public route, so that the power which they might have had of regulating the tolls charged on merchandise was generally considerably restricted. (3) Lastly, *the bad condition of the roads* was not sufficiently compensated for by the development of water transport service, because the different corporations for organising the river traffic each looked after a special piece of the river, with the result that the merchandise had to be shipped from the boats of one company to those of another, which gave rise to complications. For instance, the *Hanse of Rouen* stopped the *Parisian Traffickers by Water* from using the Lower Seine, while the latter in their turn put an end to their "frequentation," as they used then to call it, of the Middle Seine.

[1] Pigeonneau, *Histoire du Commerce de la France*, vol. i. pp. 112–115.

Thus, under the influence of the renewed prosperity and the enfranchisement of the towns, a large number of ordinary markets in the principal urban centres came to be used in addition to the great periodical fairs, which, however, became more and more important, owing to the increasing prosperity. But it was only by slow degrees that the radius affected by these markets became enlarged.

Before the towns had had time of themselves to overcome the obstacles that checked the extension of their business, the enterprises of chivalry suddenly opened a new and distant field for the development of commerce.

The expeditions of the knights, whether crusades or ambitious conquests, which were directed towards the south and the east, and pushed to very remote parts, were crowned at first with wonderful success, and provided excellent opportunities for western traders by opening out for them countries that had long been closed and which have been at all times the most fruitful sources of commercial wealth.

But this distant commerce was not organised by the free action of the towns in France ; for, while chivalry was achieving this unlooked-for venture, the king had succeeded in laying a hand, on the one side, on the liberty of the towns, and on the other, on the power of the lords, so that it was he himself who by taking the towns under his control and managing the lords, whether they liked it or not, made it his business to intervene : (1) to guarantee to merchants security against the attacks of the lords and of adventurers ; (2) to restrict or reduce the number and the rate of the *tolls* ; (3) to ameliorate in some small degree the *condition of the roads*, but above all to facilitate the use of the waterways in spite of the competition of the Hanses.

Needless to say, the king rewarded himself for his trouble with certain fees, which still continued to be very onerous for commerce.

Thus the turn which events took in France takes us outside the range of the feudal system and shows us distant commerce only under the monarchical system of government. We must therefore return to Germany, where we know that the social evolution was a few centuries behind that of France : we shall there be able to see in what manner distant commerce, which was opened up for western merchants by the crusades and by the

conquests of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, developed in the midst of feudalism and in towns that were still free.

In entering upon the study of distant commerce, the type of commerce which was characteristic of that epoch—and it was genuine commerce and a very different thing from the direct exchange of articles on a small scale in one locality which was carried on by the artisans themselves—we must observe that we are dealing with a special means of living, a condition of life and a state of society in which traffic has the advantage over manufacture and the trader and transporter take the lead of the manufacturer, even in cases where one and the same person carries on these different enterprises at the same time.

The products of the tropics and analogous regions provide incomparably the most important articles of commerce. This has been so since the first ages of the world, has never ceased to be, and is so to-day as much as ever. It explains why European peoples take an interest, which appears very strange at first sight, in disputing even at the present moment the possession of a continent which is as remote and impracticable as Africa, and moreover in disputing the possession of the central part of Africa, which is the least accessible, the least habitable, and the most barbarous. Three-quarters of the history of the world, ancient as well as modern, would be incomprehensible to anyone who had not realised the important part played by the tropics, the great generators of commerce.

The peoples who receive the products of the tropics and of analogous regions direct are the peoples of the south and the east.

Therefore the south and the east are the great markets.

Now, we have already learned from our previous study of Germany the extent to which our Neo-Germans were separated from the south and east, and thereby shut out from commerce. The Slavs and the Fins, with their patriarchal mode of life, occupied the whole of Central Europe from north to south, from the base of Jutland to ancient Greece. The great Hellenic peninsula, the other shores of the Ægean, and the region near Constantinople, were all that they had not occupied to the east of the slanting line from the base of the Gulf of Kiel to the base of the Adriatic, and from the base of the Adriatic to the great African Syrtes. It is at once clear how much the Franks and

Saxons were cut off from the east. In the south they came into contact with Neo-Latin peoples.[1]

It is apparent from a glance at the map that the nearest point by which Germany could reach the southern and eastern seas was the great bay to the north of the Adriatic. But that point was outside our particularist region. When, therefore, thanks to the eastern crusades and the conquest in the south, the Neo-German world was brought into touch with the countries possessing valuable natural products, it made use of peoples who were not Neo-Germans as intermediaries, and afforded them excellent opportunities of developing their commerce.

I will state in a few words the history of this branch of commerce, which was so much influenced by the particularists, who in their turn reaped the benefits of it.

The people dwelling round the great bay at the north of the Adriatic, who were led by circumstances to take the lead in the commercial movement, were not unprepared for it. A race of navigators was bred there which originated in very much the same way as the inhabitants of Tyre and Sidon. When Attila invaded Italy, the inhabitants of the lands round the north of the Adriatic had sought refuge in the scattered islands in the midst of the lagoons. They made their living by carrying on marine industries, by exchanging fish and salt for whatever they wanted. At the same time they found it profitable to do a certain amount of shipping. In that way they became traders. They gradually extended their journeys along the coasts, reached Greece, entered the Ægean Sea, and touched at Constantinople. They then found that the east was practically close by on their left as soon as they sailed out of the Adriatic, and, once there, it was easy for them to penetrate the eastern shores in all directions. They made their way to the North Sea, and even succeeded in making settlements in the Caspian, where they had salt mines. They landed all along the coast of Asia Minor and Syria ; they went south to Egypt.

They were the Venetians, needless to say.

When the crusaders had been persuaded, by the prodigious difficulties of the overland journey across Europe, to take to the sea, they went to Venice, the nearest port, to ask for vessels. And Venice then rose to an unheard-of height of prosperity.

[1] See maps 22 and 25, *Atlas*, Vidal-Lablache.

Not only did she make enormous profits by this unwonted transport service, but she conceived a lofty policy in the interests of commerce, she armed a fleet for war at her own expense, took an important part in the capture of maritime towns in the Holy Land, and made herself recognised as sovereign, or made the crusaders grant her the sovereignty of some of the ports or of certain quarters of the towns and of several islands in the Archipelago. In a word, she knew how to employ the crusades to the advantage of her commerce.

We have already observed how it came about that commerce was the only profitable result, on the material side, of the crusades:[1] it certainly was extremely profitable. The citizens of Venice, who had not an inch of land beyond their own houses in Venice itself, had the most princely villas in the countries of the east and south that were opened up by their trade. "The villas, the gardens, the castles of our fellow-citizens," says an old Venetian chronicler, "are Dalmatia, Roumania, Greece, Trebizond, Syria, Armenia, Egypt, Cyprus, Candia, La Pouille, Sicily, and other lands where they find happiness and security, and where they live for scores of years with their sons, their nephews, and their families. Leonard Venieri, who was Procurator of St. Mark, settled at Constantinople, where he bought a beautiful palace; several of the Ca-Mosto family lived in Syria; Sebastian Ziani, who was afterwards doge, lived in Armenia for a long time; some members of the Bondumieri family were settled at Acre; the Donado-Moros at Negropont. . . ."[2]

But, in spite of the exceptional advantages in her favour,—we shall define them better presently,—Venice had not been, and was not, without rivals.

The three chief rivals were Amalfi, Pisa, and Genoa. I quote them in the order of their increasing importance.

These towns had acquired their liberty during the ninth century. In this respect they were far in advance of our northern communes. They had not, as a matter of fact, passed through the feudal system; but they had simply taken advantage of the fall of the power of the Lombards, the Old German conquerors of Italy, to declare themselves independent.

[1] See above, pp. 324, 325.

[2] See *Histoire de Venise*, by Galibert, p. 171.

The Lombards, as we know, had been defeated by Charlemagne, but he had not had time to reorganise their territory before leaving the empire to his impotent successors.

It was the coming of the crusaders that brought about a sudden development in these three towns.

The result of this development was twofold. The families who had amassed the greatest riches through commerce, substituted, in their own favour, the government of a single person for that of the city, in the same way as the empire had formerly done at Rome. Subsequently the towns tried to destroy one another in order to remain without rivals.

Those are the most marked phases of their history, the same in all cases, with variations in detail which do not claim our attention here.

Amalfi, being the weakest, was the first to succumb to the domination of the first Norman prince who exchanged the title of Count of Sicily for that of King (1130), and to the repeated attacks of its rival, Pisa (1135–37).

Pisa likewise, in its turn, succumbed in the rivalry for power which the adventures of Ugolino have rendered famous, and fell beneath the attacks of the Genoese, its competitors, at the battle of Meloria in 1284.

Genoa, then left to face Venice alone, maintained the struggle more vigorously. It would be fairly correct to say that it shared the commerce of the east equally with Venice. The region round Constantinople and the whole basin of the Black Sea specially belonged to Genoa. In 1381 it very nearly annihilated its rival's fleet in the port of Chioggia, a little to the south of Venice.

Yet how was it that Genoa succumbed? As was the case with the others, her fall was due on the one hand to the internal intrigues which were constantly made with the object of setting up despots; and on the other, to the rivalry of a maritime power which arose towards the end of the Middle Ages, and which we shall come across later on, that of the Aragons, the Spaniards of the kingdom of Aragon, which deprived her of her trade in the west of the Mediterranean.

Why did Venice happen to be stronger than her three rivals, Amalfi, Pisa, and Genoa?

The superiority of Venice was due to two things:

1. She had a considerable *advantage* over the others from the point of view of *place*, *time*, and *trade*; 2. Her maritime position in the lagoons was incomparably the most secure.

1. (*a*) *Her advantage from the point of view of place.*—We have already remarked that the base of the Adriatic, where Venice is situated, was the nearest point at which the new people of the west, our Neo-Germans, could take ship to go to the east. On the other hand, it was easy to penetrate from that point into the interior of the lands to the west and north in order to trade in eastern wares. To the west, the vast plain of the Po, with the great river and its tributaries which spread out so conveniently to right and left all the way up the plain, made an easy approach to France through Transalpine Gaul. On the north, the river Adige brought the traveller nearly up to the Inn, a tributary of the Danube; in modern times the chief railway line between Germany and Italy follows that route.

"Of all the trading republics of Italy," says Reclus, "Venice became the richest and the most powerful after many struggles which she sustained with the most ardent patriotism; she had, moreover, the best position for facilitating trade. Her position at the extremity of the Adriatic, not far from that part of the Alps where the mountains form a low threshold as it were between the plateaux of Illyria and the snow-covered peaks of the Carinthia and the Tyrol, enables her to communicate easily with all the markets of Germany, Flanders, and Scandinavia."[1] These advantages become all the more apparent if the position of Venice is contrasted with that of Amalfi, Pisa, or Genoa, which are far less favourably situated.

(*b*) *Her advantage from the point of view of time.*—We have already seen that Venice began her career in the fifth century at the time of Attila's invasion. From that time onward the successive raids which were made upon Upper Italy merely helped to increase the population of Venice. By degrees new landing-places were made in the lagoons where new groups were formed upon those islets that still remained unoccupied. Such was the growth of the Confederation of the Venetians. Each islet was governed by a deliberative assembly of its inhabitants, who elected one or more tribunes to carry on the administration. Upon occasion the tribunes of the different

[1] Reclus, vol. i. p. 382.

islets met together to discuss affairs of common interest, and there were likewise general assemblies of the inhabitants of all the islets. This federal form of government underwent many modifications, but from the fifth century onwards the lagoon-dwelling people went on steadily increasing, and often unexpectedly received large reinforcements of inhabitants. The towns situated on the mainland, like Amalfi, Pisa, and Genoa, pursued another destiny at that time; owing to the fact that they were not isolated like Venice, the successive invasions, which were far from all contributing to their development, produced a very different effect upon them. They did not begin to grow till the ninth century, when they all escaped from the Lombard and Carlovingian domination, as we have already said.

From another point of view also Venice had the advantage in time. The Exarchate of Ravenna and the Pentapolis, between the Apennines and the Adriatic, were the last countries of any importance in Italy which remained part of the Empire of the East. In those places there lingered traditions of Roman and Oriental life which made the inhabitants anxious to maintain relations with the Byzantine world of the most intimate and varied kind. The people of those countries became the special and chosen customers of the Venetians, a fact which gave Venice a great advantage over the towns which were separated from the Roman Empire and in which commerce did not flourish till later (from the ninth century onwards), when signs of progress were shown by the "barbarian" world.

(*c*) *Her advantage from the point of view of trade.*—Situated as Venice was in mid-ocean, and possessing no cultivable land, her only resources were those of the sea: fishing and maritime trade. The population was therefore entirely maritime. Seafaring absorbed all their interest, all their thought, all their energies exclusively. It is easy to see what an advantage in the matter of maritime commerce this specialisation, which was thus absolutely forced upon them, gave them over the people of the towns on the mainland, who had a great variety of means of existence and a great diversity of sources of wealth, and who only "took to the sea" when they were really convinced of the increasing advantages of commerce.

2. *Security.* — We have now to examine the material

security which her incomparable maritime situation assured to Venice. At a time when security depended entirely on private means of defence—that is to say, throughout the Middle Ages—a natural situation like that enjoyed by Venice was of the highest advantage. With the advance in methods of public and political, national and international defence which countries enjoy to-day independently of their situation, whether it be strong or weak, this advantage has disappeared. Venice, set in the midst of lagoons, was as impregnable by land as by sea before the military inventions of modern times were introduced. She owed her safety to that privilege. When the Franks conquered Lombardy, they recognised that they were absolutely powerless to take Venice from the land side. Had it not been physically impossible, they would have destroyed the town, so annoyed were they at the opposition its inhabitants made to their intervention in the affairs of Lombardy. It was at that juncture that the Venetians separated themselves from the population of the shore, which had till then formed a single confederation with that of the islets. Venice was thus, at the very outset, undoubtedly saved by her impregnable position. When the Genoese blockaded the whole Venetian fleet in the lagoons of Chioggia, in 1380, they would have completely annihilated it had they been able to penetrate into the harbour in such a way as to make an attack practicable. But the entrance had become too narrow owing to the immense deposits of sand and mud which protected it. Thus Venice was saved at the zenith of her power. These two facts are enough to make clear the importance of her position, which was impregnable both by land and sea; and it is likewise clear that her safety depended on her position as much in the time of the greatest power of her republic as when she was in the miserable condition of her earliest days. Her position seems all the more significant when we remember that Tyre and Sidon were also founded upon islands, and that the power of Carthage would not have perished had the town only remained impregnable. But neither Tyre nor Sidon nor Carthage had sites to compare with that of Venice, cut off as she was from the land by estuaries and broad reaches of mud, and separated from the sea by *lidi*, long banks of sand and mud with only narrow passages dividing them.

A third cause of the superiority of Venice sprang from the two former causes, her early development and her position of security.

Owing to her early development and her position of security, her commerce had developed considerably more than that of her rivals; in Venice, therefore, it was incomparably more difficult for one private man to raise himself above all his fellows. Her government, in spite of all the attempts of the ambitious, remained in the hands of several men representing different opinions, and escaped autocracy, properly so called; it remained republican, but it became an oligarchy, after being at first democratic, and then, with the rapid increase of prosperity, aristocratic. At the same time this oligarchy, which brought greater resources into play in governing, and displayed a more consistent policy than pure autocracy, in the end became at least quite as absolute and quite as tyrannical; so that, like her rivals, Venice in the end adopted a policy of repression and despotism, though later than they did and under a form of power which was more enduring. We shall see later on how the extraordinary evolution which the world underwent made her lose the advantages of her precocious development and of her position of security, and was also the irremediable cause of her fall.

Whilst the Mediterranean was thus being exploited from the point of view of commerce by tribes who had not been transformed by the influence of the Neo-Germans, the latter were developing another maritime region for their own immediate commerce: the northern and western seas, the Baltic, the North Sea, and the Atlantic.

There was no question there of traffic in tropical or similar kinds of produce; and, consequently, the difference was very great.

In the north, the commodities of trade were the productions of a race that was developing with energy—namely, the Neo-German race, and the races it assimilated.

The North Sea was their centre; it was, as it were, an inland sea, lying between the Norwegians, the Saxons, the Franks, and the Anglo-Saxons, who had spread all round about it.

The land which projected most into that sea, and formed the most advanced naval position, was just at the other

extremity of the imaginary line of which Venice formed the southern extremity, the line drawn from the base of Jutland to the base of the Adriatic. There the three Hanseatic towns—Lubeck, Hamburg, and Bremen—arose, right in the midst of Saxon country: we shall now see what resulted from this.

The Saxons did not create the commerce of the northern seas: it existed before the formation of their race. The Goths, those Old Germans of the eastern slope of Scandinavia, carried on the commerce of the Baltic together with no small amount of piracy. They exploited the natural products of the coasts. They even traded with distant countries in one of these products, amber, which may be compared to the rich products of the tropics in so far as it is rare and of peculiar value. By making short journeys by land, they penetrated—or rather, the foreigners from the east penetrated—from west to east and from north to south by following the slanting way formed by the great rivers of Russia, some of which flow into the Baltic, while others flow into the Black Sea or the Caspian. But there was no likelihood of the commerce of the Baltic competing to any serious extent with that of the Mediterranean, because the opening towards the east formed by the Black Sea and the Caspian was too much encumbered with obstacles to make transport easy. So the two zones of commerce were sharply divided: the commerce of the Mediterranean and the commerce of the northern seas. Venice, whose energies were all directed towards the east, and who was already hard pressed on the west by Amalfi, Pisa, and Genoa, scarcely quitted the Mediterranean; she did indeed send a few ships to Bruges, in Flanders, but she had no settlement of any importance on the Atlantic coast. On the other hand, the Scandinavians only very rarely entered the Mediterranean on some venture or another, and could not be counted as regular merchants. When the Saxons, who, as we have seen, were always from the earliest times drawn rather towards the conquest of lands, did take up sea-trading, for reasons we shall presently mention, they rapidly took the lead of the Old Germans of Eastern Scandinavia, the Goths, the Danes, and the Swedes, in spite of the fact that the latter had had a considerable start. The collision between the Danes and the

Saxons in Great Britain is a sufficient illustration of the extent to which the Danes were sailors and the Saxons were farmers. But when races belonging to different types of society—the one communal, the other particularist—compete with one another, any start that the one may have over the other counts for very little : the Saxons very soon overtook and passed the Danes.

The Saxons of Great Britain were not the first to take up commerce : their fertile lands gave them enough to do ; it was the Saxons of the Saxon plain who, owing to the barrenness of their land and the lack of an aristocracy with landed property and keen agricultural instincts, were the first to feel the need of outlets for their activity in the world outside. By imposing upon them an aristocratic Government, whose duty it was to protect the country within and without by a public force, Charlemagne gave them an outlet in the form of fresh employments and military expeditions, which met with success so long as they were under the leadership of the Saxon dukes who became emperors, and the Saxon dukes who became the opponents of the Frankonian emperors. But when feudalism, in its movement towards emancipation, gave rise to new Saxon emperors, the Saxons rejected the new dukes, and returned to their simple private life with its entire dependence upon local resources. It was at that time that they sought a fresh outlet for their independence in maritime commerce.

Circumstances were favourable : it was at the beginning of the twelfth century, just when industry was reviving in the towns and chivalry was opening up the world. And, in Germany, this movement coincided with the degeneration of royal and imperial power, whilst in France, on the contrary, royalty was regaining its vigour and preparing to lay hands upon the communes.

The emancipation of the towns in Germany went on in very much the same way as in France, with this enormous difference, that they had the power of maintaining and increasing their liberty, and were not abruptly checked by a central power.

There was still another difference worth noting. The towns had been established in Germany even from the time of Charlemagne, as a means of taking possession of the land,

as military settlements and administrative colonies. People had to be enticed to come to them. The only way to attract them was to make them large grants of land within the city walls or in the neighbourhood, so that for the time being they could obtain the prime necessaries of life, and, in the future, should have opportunities of making profits large enough to compensate them amply for the estates they had abandoned elsewhere. That was the origin of the *Bourgeoisie Terrienne* —that is, of the class of burgesses with landed property who were not artisans and merchants pure and simple.

These burgesses kept a strong hold upon their rights over the urban land, and all who subsequently came there were simply artisans of different trades, tenants of one kind or another, vassals, so to speak, of the burgesses who had first settled there and of their descendants. They formed a kind of *burgess-nobility*, which governed the city in virtue of its rights of ownership.

But it was not long before the artisans, especially in Saxon lands, made the burgesses open their gates to them, and nearly everywhere in the course of the fourteenth century they succeeded in counterbalancing the influence of the burgesses. The fact is that recruits were constantly joining the ranks of the artisans from the agricultural population, which was particularist or had been assimilated by the particularists, with the result that the aspect presented by the towns in Germany was utterly different from that of the commercial cities of the Mediterranean, Venice, Genoa, Pisa, and others, which began by having a free democratic government, and ended in autocracy or oligarchy and a policy of repression. In the case of Germany the towns were established by the authority of a king or emperor, were carried on by an aristocracy of burgesses, and ended in a democracy of artisans.

We observed that the three towns on Saxon territory which were situated in the best way for marine commerce were Lubeck, Hamburg, and Bremen, which have harbours on the Trave, the Elbe, and the Weser respectively. They stand a little way back from the sea, so that they were safe from chance attacks of pirates or from any other hostile maritime power. But they were far from having as naturally secure a position as Venice.

How was it that these towns, which entered upon their career after Venice, and had not her security, and showed a tendency towards democratic government and increasing liberty, how was it that they were able to outdo their rivals in the North Sea, defend themselves successfully against all their enemies, and acquire a political importance equal to that of sovereign princes, comparable to that of Venice, and capable of disposing of crowns on occasion ?

They encroached on no one's liberty to achieve these things, and formed no central power. Therein, indeed, they showed the true genius of the particularist races.

The towns came to a free understanding together, but showed vigorous initiative and practical common sense with regard to everything which was of real common interest to them. This kind of union, which is comparable, though it has many differences, to the union of the States of North America, ended in a confederation, I might almost say a nation, of eighty united towns. It was the celebrated *Hanseatic League*, or *Teutonic Hanse*.

The majority of the towns were purely Saxon, situated on Saxon territory and in the adjoining lands, where the Saxon race and Saxon name had spread.

Outside Saxon territory there were a good number of towns on the southern shore of the Baltic with non-Saxon inhabitants which adhered to the league, but they had been founded to a great extent by Saxon emigrants.

The towns situated on the Rhine, where it passes near Saxon land, from Nimwegen to Cologne, also joined the league, and they too were of Neo-Germanic formation.

Another league was formed in Germany by the towns along the middle part of the Rhine, and another by the towns on the tributaries of the Upper Danube ; they were all commercial and made use of navigation. They were called respectively the *Rhenish League* and the *Swabian League*. But they never grew strong, and only lasted a short time. They had not the same natural importance as the northern towns which were situated near the sea, but it must also be taken into account that they were not inhabited by that particularist race which found means to create numbers of towns all over the barren Saxon plain. All the towns of Hanover which

are still of some importance, those of Westphalia and Eastern Saxony, belonged to the *Hanseatic League*.

On becoming members of the *Hanseatic League*, the towns kept their absolute autonomy and whatever variety of government they possessed. They were at liberty to leave the league. They could even re-enter it, but on condition that there were no decisive reasons connected with their late withdrawal against their readmission. The league could thus be enlarged or restricted according to the need of the times, without any commotion or disturbance either within or without.

The chief strength of its power was exerted in two directions mainly :

1. It defended itself against the political rivalry of the Danes and the Swedes. It had therein to deal with a force which was able to command two kingdoms, and often even united them ; the league, however, attained its end in spite of the necessity of constantly renewing the struggle. Its supreme efforts were above all directed towards preventing the formation of the celebrated union of all the States of Scandinavia, including Norway. Though the league was unsuccessful, it managed to secure all the rights which were necessary for its commerce with Scandinavian lands. It was in the course of this severe struggle that the Hanseatics reached the zenith of their power. In 1385 they held a diet at Lubeck at which several crowned heads appeared and to which other sovereigns sent ambassadors to represent them.

2. The league obtained outside the associated towns four large markets where the privileges it had secured made it all-powerful: London, Bruges, Bergen, and Novgorod. They are sufficient proof of the extent of its commerce.

The Saxons of Great Britain, as we have said, were entirely taken up with the development of their fertile land, with the improvement of their farms, but the time came when they were able and obliged to think of something beyond. It was they—as we should have expected—who became the new and most formidable rivals which the Hanseatic League had to encounter. In 1436 England withdrew the rights which she previously granted to the Hanseatics, and herself began to use navigation. This, however, brings us to modern times, at which we must stop for the moment. But though the

English competed with and showed themselves superior to the Saxons, they did not destroy their activity upon the seas, as we shall see.

The fact remains that the Hanseatic League continued its development till the end of the Middle Ages, without interfering with the public liberty. The less important, less active towns gradually dropped away from the union to follow the very diverse fortunes which were usually imposed upon them by the reviving central power, by the emperors or kings of modern times. But the free port of Hamburg is still a splendid proof to this day of the benefit of the institutions of the famous league. Those who wish to get some idea of it cannot do better than refer to a work recently published by M. Paul de Rouziers : *Hambourg et l'Allemagne contemporaine.*[1]

The continuation of our history brings us to an event which had the most extraordinary influence upon the development of the particularist race at the present day, and which introduces us to modern times : the discovery of the East and West Indies.

[1] See especially pp. 202, 210 ff.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE DISCOVERY OF THE EAST AND WEST INDIES

WE have pursued the study of the agricultural, industrial, and commercial particularist peoples up to the end of the Middle Ages—that is to say, to the end of the domination of feudalism and the coming of the great European monarchies of modern times.

We have now to see what became of those people under the new régime.

Since the area open to the influence of the particularists was then about to be enormously widened, our first step must be to form some idea of this extension of *area*. How did it come about ?

I refer, of course, to the discovery of the East and West Indies, which is naturally connected with our comparative study of Venice and the Hanseatic League.

We have already said that the products of the tropics and of the neighbouring regions have been, throughout all the epochs of history, the great and unrivalled objects of commerce. We have seen the advantages Venice derived from that commerce. We have also formed some notion of the singular vital energy which the Hanseatic League must have derived from the particularist form of society in order to reach such a height of commercial prosperity as it did without having had access to tropical countries. But we shall form a still better idea of the importance of this commerce with the tropics when we see it closed for Venice—a blow which crushed her—and opened for our people of the north, whose extraordinary development at the present day is due to it.

However, as this chapter will be only preliminary to the study of the modern phase of the particularist formation, we shall stop exactly at the moment when the new field of action

opens before the Saxon race. We shall see a little later what it achieved there.

In order to get a good idea of the relations of Europe with the tropics, it is necessary to look at the map of the world.

The tropical region lies between the first twenty-three and a half degrees to the north and to the south of the line of the equator; but the region lying between the twenty-third and thirtieth degrees on both sides of the equator may be considered to have practically the same climate—that is, a mean annual temperature of 20° above zero (centigrade). Now one glance at the map will at once show how far to the north of that zone Europe is situated.

But further: if one looks to see what lands lie directly south of Europe in the tropical or semi-tropical zone, one finds that they are very deficient in some ways. In the first place, there is the desert of Sahara. Lower down there is a great central continent, the Soudan, into which it is extremely difficult to penetrate. Lastly come the equatorial forests. Beyond is the other hemisphere, where the same conditions are reproduced, though in a modified form and in an inverse order. We need not take into account East Central Africa, which is largely deprived of its tropical products by the altitude of its land.

If, however, we turn from Europe to Asia, we see that, on the contrary, the tropical countries—India, Indo-China, Southern Persia, and Arabia—are, as it were, broken up by the sea and are easily accessible along their coast-line. Except for the Arabian Desert—which, by the way, merchants are not obliged to cross—all these countries are conveniently supplied with water and yield the products peculiar to the tropics.

The conclusion drawn from this examination is very simple: it is that as far as Europe is concerned, the practicable and productive tropical or semi-tropical countries lie, not to the south, but to the east. Thus we find that the products of the tropics are not talked of in Europe as products of the south, but as products of the east, and that accounts for the fame of *Oriental trade.*

I am now leaving the New World out of consideration since we have not yet spoken of its discovery. We are limiting ourselves to the world known to the Middle Ages.

But we must push our examination further.

In order to reach the east, the peoples of Europe have one of the most convenient of roads, the Mediterranean, whose praises we need not here rehearse. However, that sea does not go so far as the Asiatic lands which yield tropical products. For that reason, Europeans could not carry on trade with the tropics by that route, except by getting into touch with the people occupying the space between the Mediterranean and those distant countries. It is therefore essential to form an idea of the inhabitants of the intervening country and the routes through it.

In the Middle Ages all the intervening lands were under the domination of the Arabs or of tribes such as the Seldjoucides and Tartars, who had become assimilated with them, and had settled in the central parts of nearer Asia. In fact, whilst the German invaders were taking possession of the western part of Europe, and the Slav invaders were filling the eastern part, the enormous Arab invasion begun by Mahomet was spreading by the south from the basin of the Caspian to the Pyrenees, so that the whole of Europe and the Asiatic and African lands bordering on the Mediterranean were divided between three great groups of people : the Germans, the Slavs, and the Arabs.

Within this circle of " barbarians " remained enclosed the last remains of the Roman Empire, under the name of the Grecian or Byzantine Empire. It was reduced to the shores of Asia Minor and the ancient countries of Thrace, Macedonia, Greece, and Magna Græcia (Lower Italy).

The Arabs of the Arabian peninsula, who had been bred up partly as nomads whose work consisted in transporting goods across the desert, and partly as sedentaries who traded along the seacoasts, were therefore admirably fitted to play the part of intermediaries in European commerce between the Mediterranean and the tropical countries of the east.

The intervening region which they occupied is, generally speaking, a region of arid steppes. Here and there are real deserts, which, like archipelagoes and promontories, unite the two great expanses of desert, the Sahara and the desert of Gobi, one to the south, the other to the north, as if they were two great continents. But, unlike the Sahara and the Gobi, the line of small deserts which stretches from the one to the other is divided by routes which cut through it from east to west. These

dividing routes consist of large rivers, which not only serve as water-ways, but produce on their banks an abundance of pasture land, and, when cultivated, an abundance of vegetable growth sufficient to yield an ample supply of food for the large and numerous caravans which are necessary for active trade on a large scale. This explains why Arabian commerce is much more flourishing in the east than in the Sahara, apart from the fact that the tropical countries of Asia are far more fertile than those of Africa, as we have already said.

The three great routes penetrating from the basin of the Mediterranean to the tropics or to similar regions of Asia, are the three valleys of the Euphrates, the Nile, and the Oxus, now called the Amu-Daria.

For a still primitive people the Euphrates is the simplest of these routes. It was therefore the most used in ancient times and in the Middle Ages.

It is the simplest, because it is very easy to coast along the European shore of the Mediterranean, going from island to island through the Grecian Archipelago to the eastern extremity of the Mediterranean. The landing-places there, it must be said, were more practicable for the small craft of early times than for the great vessels of the present day ; and from these the desert, which is in no way very terrible, can be crossed by easy stages till the valley of the Euphrates is reached. The route most generally used in the Middle Ages was that which passed through Alexandretta and Aleppo or by Bêirût and Damascus. Once the Euphrates is reached, the traveller has only to follow the course of the river in order to reach India on the left and Arabia on the right by continuing his journey by one or the other side of the Persian Gulf.

The second route for penetrating to the east is on the south, by the Nile.

The traveller used to go up the Nile as far as Memphis, which is now replaced by Cairo ; in more remote times, he went as far as Thebes, and from there a short journey across the desert brought him to the Red Sea, which took him to the great sea of the east, the Indian Ocean. It was a less direct route than that of the Euphrates and less easy because navigation in the Red Sea and across the Indian Ocean was dangerous and required skill.

The third route lies much farther north : it is that of the Oxus or Amu-Daria.

In order to reach it, it is necessary to go right across the Black Sea—the *Pontus Euxinus* of ill-fame ; then to traverse the space between that sea and the Caspian ; finally, to cross the Caspian. There the traveller finds, not the Oxus itself, which has been lost in the sand and ceased to flow into the Caspian from time immemorial, but the old bed of the Lower Oxus. Rivers of this sort, which are absorbed by the earth, keep the lower lands through which they used to flow in a moist and fertile condition by a process of infiltration, so that the Arabs give the same name of *Ouadi* to the flowing river and to the still moistened valley from which the river has disappeared. From the Oxus, India can only be reached by going round or by crossing the enormous mountain chain of Afghanistan.

There were alternative routes between the Black Sea and the Caspian : one could go by the Rion, the Phasis of antiquity, at the mouth of which is situated Poti, and by Kura—that is the route the railway now follows ; or else one could go into the Sea of Azov and ascend the Don to the place where it comes nearest to the Volga, and then go down the Volga to the Caspian.

There is still another route to the east which might be mentioned as well as the three great routes I have just described, but it is composite in some degree. It goes north from Trebizond, a port on the Black Sea, to the valley of the Tigress, crossing the mountains of Armenia, and from there descends to the Euphrates.

The Arabs, then, were at once masters of the Euphrates, the Nile, and the Oxus.

But it must be well understood that they would have liked nothing better than to be masters of the Mediterranean itself, for the shipping trade had taught them navigation ; they were the great navigators of the Red Sea and Indian Ocean, and those seas, as we have said, demanded skilful sailors.

So, at the time of their great conquest, when they held the land stretching from Turkestan to Spain by the north of Africa, they attempted to get possession of the Mediterranean.

They first had to fight with the Grecian Empire, the Byzantines.

We know that, after the submission of Greece, the Romans owed their naval power to the Greek Navy. This maritime

force continued to work with great activity during and after the invasions of the barbarians, who were scarcely at all skilled in navigation, with the exception of the Danes and Normans, who appeared later and did not go outside the north seas. Thus, at the beginning of the Middle Ages trade in the Mediterranean was carried on by the Byzantines.

The fact that they, as it were, specialised in navigation, explains how it was that the islands, the peninsulas, and the shores of the Mediterranean, Sicily, the extremity of Italy and of Spain, and the African coast, were the only places at which they gained successes over the barbarians and made them retire.

The Arabs, at that time called Saracens, then began the struggle with the Byzantines by sea. They succeeded so well that they took away all their possessions in the south and east of the Mediterranean: Cyprus, Crete, Sicily, Sardinia, Spain, the African coast, Egypt, and Syria. The possessions of the Byzantines were confined to the Ægean Sea and the Gulf of Tarentum.

The maritime commerce of the Arabs with the Germanic race on the northern shore of the Mediterranean did not prosper, because the Arabs behaved far more like pirates, like conquerors, like enemies of the name of Christian, than like traders. Even those who, rarely enough, behaved in a less repulsive manner, were not received with favour because of their kinship with their dreaded compatriots.

Under these circumstances, Venice, in her retired position at the base of the Adriatic and protected by her lagoons, was able to make a commercial connection with the inhabitants of Germany. She was able without much trouble to bar the sea she ruled against the Arab pirates, and act policeman in that arm of the sea where there are few refuges for a fleet between the slope of the Illyrian Alps and that of the Apennines. Her vessels could sail freely right down the Adriatic, and on issuing from that sea they entered Byzantine waters, where they traded directly with the Greeks.

The Byzantines, the Arabs, and the Venetians thus shared the Mediterranean: the Byzantines held the north-east, the Arabs the south, and the Venetians the north-west.

Of these three maritime powers, Venice, which was nothing more than a republic that had been founded on a marsh, must necessarily have been the least for a long time.

But what a change came about, what a bustle there was in every part of the Mediterranean when chivalry reached its shores! The Normans of Robert Guiscard began by taking Magna Græcia from the Byzantines and Sicily from the Arabs. Then the Crusaders conquered Palestine, Syria, and the greater part of the Empire of Constantinople. Under Saint Louis they threatened the coasts of Egypt and Africa. This meant the ruin of Byzantine and Greek trade on the Mediterranean; the field remained clear for Venice and her few rivals on the west: Amalfi, Pisa, and Genoa.

So it was to chivalry, as I indicated before, that was due the triumph of the commerce of the western people over that of the Arabs and Byzantines in the Mediterranean.

But this re-establishment of the commerce of the west with the tropics rested upon a very fragile basis: chivalry, in a word. The conquests of the knights, which were, moreover, very superficial, did not extend beyond the coasts. The Arabs remained masters of the interior of the region lying between the Mediterranean and the tropical countries.

So much so that, though the western peoples received products from India, Arabia, and Ethiopia, they had no sure and personal knowledge of those countries, which remained unknown to them, just as the centre of Africa was unknown to us a hundred years ago.

In the sixth century, shortly before the invasion of the Arabs, a merchant of Alexandria, who had traded in India and subsequently become a monk, wrote down all the experiences of his journeys. His name was Cosmas, and he was nicknamed Indicopleustes—that is, the Indian navigator. From his time to the end of the fifteenth century, when the Indies were discovered, as we shall see, no European capable of giving any useful information had penetrated into those countries, or at any rate had returned from them.

It is obvious how precarious this newly opened trade with the tropics must have been, since the western peoples only held the Mediterranean in virtue of the ephemeral successes of chivalry, and had not been able to get any firm footing in the interior of the country lying between that sea and the tropical regions. The Arabs had only to retake possession of the shores and islands at the eastern end of the Mediterranean in order to

ruin it utterly. And they did not wait long. The decay of chivalry rapidly set in: we know how inevitable it was. As early as 1187 Jerusalem again fell into the hands of the Saracens. As early as 1261 Constantinople was reoccupied by the Greeks, who had moved the seat of their empire to Nicea.

But this natural decay was seriously aggravated by the decisive entry of the Turks into the field of action, that is the inhabitants of Turkestan, who had been trying for a long time to supplant the Arabs, whose subjects they were. Brought up as they had been in the great central steppe of Asia, they were not trained to commerce like the Arabs; they were coarse and primitive, and incapable of leading any but a military and domineering life when they left the isolation of their pastures. In 1254 the Mamelukes, a band of soldiers principally composed of Turks, got possession of the government of Egypt. In 1299 Othman, the leader of the band of Turks called Ottomans, set up his power in the centre of Asia Minor, at Konieh, the Iconium of antiquity.

There is no need to relate how, by the efforts of the Mamelukes in the south and the Ottomans in the north, the whole of the east of the Mediterranean was taken at one swoop from the Latins, the Greeks, the knights, both laymen and ecclesiastics, and the merchants of Venice and Genoa. It is a celebrated chapter in history; it marks the beginning of what has been called the Modern Age.

It was in this way that the commerce of the Eastern Mediterranean was opened to Venice and her rivals of the west by chivalry, and was again closed to them owing to the decadence of chivalry and the domination and conquests of the Turks.

The invasion of the Turks had a much wider influence than the internal causes of the fall of Venice, for if the access to the east had remained free to the western peoples, Venice, whose decay was due to her bad social constitution, could have been replaced, as far as her commerce in the Mediterranean was concerned, by some other town in the west which was socially better constituted. But in the series of events I have described, it was not merely Venice which perished, it was practically all the commerce of the people on the Mediterranean with the inhabitants of the country lying between it and the tropics.

The Turks did not keep up that trade because they were pirates and conquerors in the main, even far more than were the Arabs.

It still remains to be explained how it was that the Europeans, who could not have brought themselves to give up commerce with the tropics for ever, did not make a supreme effort, after the first successes of the Turks, to open afresh the route to the east from the side of the Mediterranean.

Here we must return to our examination of the map.

At the extreme west of Europe, there is a country which affords an extraordinary parallel to Syria. Just as Syria is situated at the end of the Mediterranean with its long line of coast and its harbours, so Portugal is situated on the west by the entrance to the Mediterranean, and with its long coast-line running in an almost parallel direction: it seems like another Syria projecting westwards at the head of the Mediterranean.

To complete the comparison, just as the coast of Syria was at one end of the line of traffic used by the merchants of the Mediterranean, so Portugal was at the end of the line of traffic used by the merchants of the North Sea and the Atlantic. The influence of the Hanseatic League, which reached from Novgorod to Lisbon, did not extend beyond its shores. Lisbon was the meeting-place of the northern sailor and the Oriental: from that point Venice acted as intermediary across the Mediterranean.

The last point of similarity is that, like Syria, Portugal was an Arab country. The Arabs had found their way from the end of the Mediterranean to its beginning by the direct route across the steppes and by the shore of Northern Africa. Moreover, it is a fact that the Spanish peninsula belongs to the African continent from the point of view of its physical constitution. It is like a thick block of land, loosely detached from the main mass of Africa and feebly welded on to Europe by the clumsy mass of the Pyrenees. It is really an advanced post of the east towards the west and north.

So it is quite natural to find that similar events take place in Portugal to those which we have just described as occurring in the east.

In the first place, it was chivalry which opened that maritime station to the commerce of the north, just as it had opened

the maritime stations at the eastern end of the Mediterranean to the commerce of the Western Mediterranean. Here, as there, merchants came with the knights and in their tracks.

Towards the end of the eleventh century, at the time when chivalry was at the height of its vigour in its early career, a lord of the Burgundian branch of the Capetian family, Henry of Burgundy, great-grandson of Robert the Pious, King of France, came and offered his valiant services against the Arabs in Spain to the head of the small Christian State called the kingdom of Castille, which, thanks to the heroic efforts of four centuries, had spread from the narrow chain of mountains of Asturias to the valley of the Douro.

As a reward for his exploits, he received in marriage the daughter of the King of Castille, and her dowry was a portion of the lands which he had conquered, the coast at the end of the valley of the Douro where is situated the ancient port of Oporto, also called Porto-Calle. From that place he took the title of Count of Portugal. All the rest of the land which he captured from the Arabs along the coast to its southern extremity was granted him in addition.

That was the origin of Portugal. The way in which it was founded was very much like the establishment of a principality in the Holy Land.

But the conquerors of Portugal had a great advantage over those of Syria and Palestine—namely, that its original population was composed of sedentary races. Not only could the knights, on account of the proximity of the western peoples, introduce agricultural immigrants into the country, but it had been originally peopled with Iberians, Celts, Swabians, and Visigoths, who had all in turn been reduced to a sedentary life. As for the Moors, who had established themselves among the earlier inhabitants and whom the knights conquered but did not expel, they had been brought or driven there by the Arabs, but they were chiefly Berberians or Moroccans who had been sedentary for a long time in the mountain land of the north of Africa. All this gave the country, and later on the kingdom, of Portugal a power of endurance and a power of resistance which were lacking to the principalities of the Holy Land. It had not the nomads of Turkestan at its heels.

The first successors of Henry of Burgundy, the founder of

Portugal, were naturally anxious to perfect their people in agriculture. It was still the first epoch of chivalry, and the lords had not all forgotten the traditions of farming handed down from their near ancestors. The sovereigns of Portugal displayed such marked energy in that direction that history has kept the memory of it sacred. All the evidence of history proves that they thereby assured Portugal's future. One of its kings, who lived at the end of the thirteenth century, received the name of Denis the Ploughman, and his wife, the saintly Elizabeth, the title of "Patroness of Ploughmen."

But though these people had a natural talent for farming, they showed but little power of organisation. They all belonged to the patriarchal type. And the lords in search of adventure, who came to help the king in his conquest of his States, inclined more and more, as time went on, towards the type of the knight pure and simple who performed exploits. None of these people were in any degree capable of introducing into the country the genuine feudal system, still less the Saxon system. The measures adopted by the sovereigns in order to develop agriculture are very much like those which an Emperor of Russia would adopt. They reveal a master, little short of an autocrat, who is trying to lead a band, a badly disciplined army: he evidently has none of the qualities possessed by Charlemagne, the great landowner, who set in motion by the force of his own example a class of powerful agricultural overseers. Royal commands were issued like *ukases;* they determined for the whole country what ought to be sown, and when and how; they settled definitely the whole round of work.

Under such conditions, it was not long before the spirit of chivalry got the upper hand. Its triumph was decisive, complete, and incontestable when John the First, named the "Great," came to the throne. He was one of the sons whom his father, the King of Portugal, had made the Great Master of the Order of the Knights of Aviz. Needless to say, military orders abounded in Portugal.

Portugal, then, originated from a patriarchal rather than a feudal form of society, and its inhabitants were only agricultural in a small degree; then came the knights, as we have just seen. It remains for us to examine the influence of chivalry upon commerce.

I said that the shores of Portugal naturally formed the end of the commercial line of traffic of the north. History proves it, as we shall see.

When the Crusades were at their height in the Holy Land, an army formed in the north took ship partly at Cologne, partly at Bremen. It coasted along Flanders, England, and France, gathering recruits as it went. When it reached Oporto, it counted a hundred and eighty ships. There it had to put into port. The soldiers thought the journey along by the French moors and the shores at the foot of the Cantabrian mountains, and across the Bay of Biscay, where navigation was extremely difficult, a long and weary one, and the sailors were obliged to rest and take in fresh stores of food in Portugal. As a stopping-place for vessels, the country has not lost its importance; the English Navy still finds it convenient for the same purpose. When the army of Northern Crusaders landed at Oporto, they were met by the most earnest entreaties of the King of Portugal to aid him in conquering Lisbon. The army re-embarked and sailed to blockade the city by sea, working in conjunction with the small Portuguese army. After holding out for five months, Lisbon was taken by assault on the 21st October 1147. The Crusaders were given the booty; they then re-embarked, and set out, not for the Holy Land, but for the north.

Two other fleets from the north, in 1189 and 1217, likewise bound on Eastern Crusades, put in to the port of Lisbon, which was then in the hands of Christians, and helped the kings of Portugal to extend their conquests farther south. They subsequently, after much labour, reached the Holy Land, where they accomplished very little.

When the kings of Portugal were masters of Lisbon, and understood how important their country was from the point of view of navigation, they began to turn their attention towards seafaring and commerce. Denis the Ploughman, of whom I spoke just now, sent for a Genoese, whom he put at the head of a fleet, and who perfected the Portuguese in the art of navigation. So that, with the encouragement of its princes, who stimulated agriculture and navigation as much as they could, Portugal, which was well stocked with produce for an external market, soon became a flourishing country renowned for its trade. And when chivalry definitely prevailed over agriculture, it

directed commerce towards the products of the tropics, and Portugal became the port for the east in the place of Syria and Palestine.

The sons of King John the First, "the Great," the Master of the Order of Knighthood of Aviz, who had ascended the throne of Portugal, one day came to their father declaring that they did not know what to do with their lives; that they had a burning desire to be armed knights, but wished to win that honour by some extraordinary feat of valour. They had thought of going to fight the Moors across the strait and of getting possession of Ceuta by some brilliant stroke; they asked the king to allow them to equip a fleet. The king consented. When Ceuta was taken by surprise, the father made his sons knights on the battlefield.

The leader of that bold enterprise was Henry of Portugal, the last of the four sons of King John, who all took part in the expedition. He was then twenty-one. That was in the year 1415. Providence had made him a man of genius, and genius is a quantity Social Science does not neglect in dealing with historical events. He was interested in everything he learned from the Moors and the Jews of Morocco about the countries of the east with which they still had dealings, but into which no Europeans any longer penetrated.

Again we find chivalry and commerce allied. Henry of Portugal was smitten with the desire of directing the energies of his princely circle and of his fellow-countrymen, who were absorbed in chivalry and commerce, towards those attractive and mysterious countries. And so completely was his programme carried out that when, at the end of that lengthy enterprise, the Portuguese at last landed in India and were asked what they had come to seek there, they replied, like true knights and genuine merchants, "Christians and spices!"

Henry set about the execution of his great project in the most serious manner. He demanded no help from laws or public and official institutions. He took up his abode all alone in sight of the sea at the point of Portugal which projected the farthest in the direction in which he wished to make his discoveries: it was at Sagres, on the Cape of St. Vincent, the *Promontorium Sacrum* of antiquity, the south-west extremity of Portugal. There he remained by himself, and laboriously

searched among the facts he had gathered from the Arabs and gleaned from the science of that time for information which would help him to attain his object. He contributed something towards the invention of the astrolabe and the perfecting of cartography. He formed a nautical school for training those whom he thought promising. Often did the dawning day find him poring over work which the night had not interrupted.

As early as 1418, according to an ancient historian, two of the young men of his house, of good family and qualified squires, —that is to say, aspirants to knighthood,—offered to accomplish some daring enterprise, in which they might, they said, "give proof of their honourable heart, and make use of their bodily energy, for their time was ill spent if it were passed in inactivity."[1] Henry had a vessel prepared for them to enable them to fight against the Moors, but recommended them above all to try to go beyond the lands already known to the south of Morocco. That was the first step in the circumnavigation of Africa which he was meditating. The two noblemen discovered Porto-Santo, one of the islands near Madeira. They gave the first impetus in this direction. In the series of expeditions which followed, Cape Bojador, which seemed to be the end of the world and which everyone was curiously frightened of rounding, was discovered, also Cape Blanco and Cape Verd. At that point the coast of Africa begins to curve in again towards the east. Henry died just when men's hopes were rising.

But the impetus he had given did not die with him. Generally speaking, all those who offered themselves for this new kind of adventure were gentlemen. They used to set out with three or four vessels. As soon as they had made any discovery worth noting, they came back. They were made knights, and became merchants. They traded in the natural riches of the country they discovered: in gold dust and spices, and, it must be added, black slaves.

While these discoveries were going on, King John II., a man who impersonated the spirit of the country at that time, was ruling Portugal. On the one hand, like a true knight, he purposed to develop the race of horses for the benefit of his military forces. He forbade his subjects, no matter of what rank

[1] Gomez Eannez de Azurara, *Chronique de Guinée.*

or station they were, to ride a mule; they must either go on foot or on horseback. And the blacksmiths of the kingdom were forbidden, on pain of death,—nothing less,—to shoe a mule! On the other hand, he sent out simultaneously two expeditions to discover the Indies, one of which was to go round by South Africa, the other by the ancient route through the Mediterranean.

He sent Bartholomew Diaz, a gentleman of his house, by the former route, and the Knight of Covilham by the latter.

That was in the year 1486.

Diaz reached the Cape of Good Hope, and conjectured that from there the African coast turned north again. But that was all he could do: his crew refused to go farther.

Covilham went to Cairo. In the company of Arabs, whose language he knew, he crossed the isthmus of Suez, followed the shores of Arabia, embarked at Aden, and landed in India at Cananore. He had told no one of his mission. He was the first Portuguese to touch on that mysterious shore. He reached it by one of the ancient routes which the conquests of the Turks had closed to the people of the west. From there he returned to Africa, went right down the east coast, still accompanied by Arabs. With a little luck he might have effected a junction with Diaz! But, after all, neither of them clearly proved that it was possible to reach India by rounding Africa.

Covilham returned to Cairo just as Diaz returned to Portugal. There at any rate he had the good fortune to meet two new envoys of John II., who reported the result of his voyage to the king. He then went to visit Ethiopia or Abyssinia, another tropical country that was also an object of search. But—and if ever there was a significant fact, it is this—the Abyssinians, though they treated him very kindly, prevented him from ever returning to Europe: they suspected the object of his expedition.

Thus, on the one side, Diaz had not found the famous lands of the tropics, and on the other, Covilham, who had found them all,—Arabia, India, Abyssinia,—did not return.

But about the same time a Genoese named Christopher Columbus came to settle at Lisbon, and married there. His mother-in-law, the widow of one of the sailors of Henry of Portugal's school, often used to talk to him of what she remembered of the first discoveries which the illustrious prince had directed, and gave him the nautical records made by her husband.

Columbus had sailed over all the European seas of the north and of the south. By a process of reasoning, which was simple enough in itself but which was brilliant in comparison with the ideas of that day, he came to the conclusion that it would be just as easy, or better, to reach the Indies by rounding the globe to the west rather than by going round by the southern hemisphere. In that very year, 1486, he went to John II. and expounded his idea. The failure of his appeal is only too well known. He then went to the King of Spain and pointed out what a good opportunity it would be of getting the lead of Portugal in the discovery of the Indies. He succeeded no better than he did with John II. But some time after, when he was on the point of laying his project before another sovereign, Queen Isabella's interest became roused; she sent for him, and granted him two ships, which she paid for out of her own royal treasury. A third caravel (a Portuguese vessel) was equipped at the expense of some brothers of the name of Pinzon, who wished to take part in the expedition in person.

Ten days after, on Friday the 3rd of August 1492, Christopher Columbus set out from Palos, a small Spanish port, and directed his course westwards in order to reach the Indies from the opposite side.

On 12th October he touched land in America, believing he had found the other side of the Indies, or at any rate Japan, which was then called Cipango.

On 6th March 1493 he landed at the port of Lisbon.

On hearing of his adventure, John II. expressed a desire to see him. Columbus appeared in answer to this invitation, "not so much," says a contemporary, "through a desire to please the king, as to chagrin him by his presence," because John II. had not had faith in him. "The monarch," continues the historian, "became very sad when he saw that the people of the country whom Christopher Columbus had brought back with him did not belong to the black race, had neither woolly hair nor features like those of the inhabitants of Guinea (that name was then applied to almost the whole of the western coast of Africa south of Guinea properly so called), but resembling, on the contrary, in the appearance, colour, and arrangement of their hair, the descriptions of the people of India, whom he was spending so much labour in seeking. Now, when Columbus

gave exaggerated accounts of those countries, employing a certain freedom of speech, and accusing and reprimanding the king for not having accepted his proposals, several gentlemen were so indignant at his manner of speech, and so much moved to hatred because of the liberty of his words, that they proposed to the king to kill him" (Barros).

Happily, the king had enough conscience to refuse to commit such an abominable crime, and eight days later, on the 15th of March 1493, Christopher Columbus landed in Spain at the harbour of Palos, whence he had set out.

John II. died on 25th October 1495 without having discovered the Indies; but the information he had received from Covilham through the intermediaries I mentioned above, proved to him that there were also negroes on the coast of Africa nearest to India, and from this he drew no further conclusion than that the point to be ascertained was whether it were really possible to round black Africa by sea.

He therefore chose another gentleman, Vasco da Gama, and put him at the head of an expedition he had prepared with the greatest care, which was charged to go north, if possible, from the Cape of Good Hope to the Indies.

Vasco da Gama set out after the king's death, on 10th July 1497.

What did he find on reaching the Mozambique Channel? Arab merchants! He took some of them on board to serve as pilots. He soon discovered that they were trying to mislead him, and to bring the expedition to nothing. He watched them closely and controlled them by threats. After many adventures and many dangers he landed at Calicut, on the coast of India, on Sunday, 20th May 1498.

So the Indies were discovered eighty-three years after the researches begun by the famous Henry of Portugal!

The first people that Vasco da Gama met were "two Moors, natives of Tunis, in Barbary, who had come to Calicut (by the old Arab route from the Mediterranean) and were residents there. One of them, called Bontaïbo, could speak Spanish and knew the Portuguese people very well, to credit his own words, as he had seen them at Tunis in the time of King John in a vessel called the *Royne*. When Vasco da Gama's envoy, who went in front, was about to enter Bontaïbo's house, the latter, recognis-

ing him as a Portuguese, said to him, 'Go to the devil! What has brought you here?'"

We will stop here for the present. We have seen sufficiently what the Arabs thought of the discovery of a route by which Europeans could reach the Indies direct without having to pass through the Arabian lands that lie between the west and east.

It meant, for the moment, the ruin of the trade of the Arabs in the Mediterranean. It is needless to say that the Arabs were the cause of many of the difficulties the Portuguese encountered in India.

We shall see the results of this, the most memorable of all discoveries, in the continuation of the history of our particularist races in the west of Europe under the influence of this new and widely extended horizon.

CHAPTER XXV

THE GREAT EUROPEAN MONARCHIES OF MODERN TIMES: SPAIN, FRANCE

A LITTLE way back we saw the revival of royal power at the dissolution of the feudal system. We now have to see how the royal power developed in the ancient feudal countries at the expense of the particularist form of society.

Nothing can show us the causes and effects of that development better than the continuation of the history of Portugal for a few years from the point at which we left it.

It is easy to conceive what became of the Portuguese in the promised land of India under the combined influence of chivalry and commerce. A handful of gallant knights and adventurers, accustomed to maritime expeditions, rapidly conquered the most accessible parts of the coast of the enormous peninsula, and the merchants made unheard-of profits. The king took for himself a right royal share of everything, and was thereby freed from the necessity of turning to other resources. Agriculture, which had never flourished except under the patronage of kings and had already declined owing to their predominating interest in chivalry and commerce, now sank to the lowest ebb. The people, who were content with little, lived on the largesses which the king, the knights, and the merchants lavished upon them, without their having done much to deserve them. This universal facility of living led in a short time to the complete decadence of the race both in the mother country and in the colonies.

I will now let the Portuguese of that time speak for themselves.

Here is the opinion, as recorded by Luiz Mendez de Vasconcellos, of Affonzo de Souza, one of the illustrious leaders of the conquest, who was made Captain General of the Indian Ocean

in 1534: "After all," he said, "the conquest of the Indies has not given us fields for crops or meadows for the pasturage of our flocks and herds; it has not given us labourers to cultivate our land, but, on the contrary, it takes from us those who formerly served us in this way; for some are carried away by greed, and others by the love of warfare, and leave us destitute of those we need. Therefore those who speculate on these things say that there is now much more land uncultivated than there was formerly, and that land is now neglected which was before cultivated. And indeed, if that were not true, we should see fewer forests and far more arable land; for if everyone were not taken up with speculations in India, the people would undoubtedly busy themselves with what was before their eyes and at their doors. It is the same with other industries."

"Here," writes one of the shrewdest and most learned of cultivated travellers of that time from Lisbon, where he resided, "we are all noblemen, and we never carry anything in our hands through the streets. . . . Do you imagine that the mother of a family would deign to buy her fish or cook her vegetables herself? . . . She uses nothing but her tongue in housekeeping. . . . Everything is done by the service of Moorish or Ethiopian slaves, of whom there are so many, especially in Lusitania and Lisbon, that they seem more numerous than the free subjects. . . . There is not a single house in which there is not at least one Moorish slave as a servant. . . . Wealthy people own a great number of these slaves of both sexes." [1]

So much for the metropolis.

As for the colonies, I cannot do better than quote the short account written by an old historian of that time. It is the true expression of the results drawn from all the evidence upon the subject: "The Romans," he says, "at the time of their greatest prosperity did not have a much larger empire than the Portuguese. . . . With so much to their advantage they might have formed a solid and permanent power, but the incompetence of some of the commanders, their elation at success, the abuse of wealth, together with vice, had changed the conquerors." Here the author gives an account of a series of disgraceful misdeeds committed against the natives. "Soon," he continues, "the Portuguese had no more human

[1] *Letters* of Nicolas Klenardt.

feeling left for one another, no more trust in each other than in the inhabitants of the country. Their lives were a strange medley of avarice, debauchery, cruelty, and piety. Soon effeminacy crept into their houses and into their armies; the tribute-money which more than a hundred and fifty Oriental princes paid soon ceased to reach the King of Portugal: all the tribute-money, the money from the customs, the taxes, were not enough to maintain a few fortresses and pay for the equipment of the necessary ships, so active was brigandage."

Only eighty-two years after the discovery of the Indies, Portugal betrayed her decadence by allowing herself to be annexed to Spain. Philip II. took possession of the Portuguese kingdom, by taking advantage of the vacancy of the throne, though it was quite contrary to the feeling of the nation that he should lay claim to the succession. Although the Portuguese recovered their independence sixty years afterwards, by a conspiracy that has remained famous, it was their last struggle. Under the Spanish domination, all that still came into the treasury from the colonies was diverted from the support of the colonies and the navy, and used for the private expenses of Spain. Everything went to ruin: "Matters reached such a pitch," said an old Portuguese historian, "that there was not a single frigate in the kingdom that could set sail, in case of emergency. The ocean was then free from end to end for every pirate who wished to fall upon our enfeebled navy." [1] The most formidable of the "pirates" mentioned by the author were the Dutch and the English. Philip had been tactless enough to entangle himself in wars with both those nations, who had just been building their navies; they profited by the war to take possession of the Portuguese colonies which had become Spanish.

It is clear from this outline of the history of Portugal how little stability a race has whose existence ultimately depends on the profession of war and on commerce, and whose enterprises, moreover, depend on the high-handed action of a central power, which at first tends to bring everything very rapidly to a fictitious height of development, but soon leads to complete ruin from lack of resources. The counterpart of this social law is seen by studying the English rule in India. The strength of

[1] Veloso de Lyra.

the English Empire does not, as a matter of fact, lie in India, which it merely governs, and with which it trades, but in the establishment and growth of the race on the agricultural estates of the new countries (such as Australia) which it peoples in the Saxon way.

The history of Portugal will do more than merely serve as a contrast to that of England, as the history of Venice did to that of the Hanseatic League : it has the further advantage of preparing us to understand how the type of the great European monarchy of modern times, which is the subject before us, was first formed in Spain.

Our object, in fact, is to find out the causes of the development of royal power at the end of the Middle Ages. Spain was actually the first kingdom to show this development, and the original formation of Spain was very nearly identical with that of Portugal. The difference was due to the fact that Spain had acquired a large territory in Europe itself : that raised it to the rank of a great monarchy, to which Portugal never attained.

Apart from the western oceanic shore, which is occupied by Portugal, the Iberian peninsula is composed of two parts :

1. The central plateau, which, except for the valley of the Ebro, occupies almost the whole peninsula, for it only leaves room round its margin for a narrow shore, to which it descends precipitously ;

2. The valley of the Ebro, with its coast-line on the Mediterranean.

The former of these two parts is in its nature entirely inland —that is to say, it is practically cut off from the sea. It is essentially pastoral, as unwooded plateaux usually are. The trees are kept down by the race of sheep which was brought over from Africa.

The second part, on the contrary, is maritime. But it really has no commercial ports except on the coast-line between the northern boundary of the valley of the Ebro and the Pyrenees in the country of Barcelona. The Ebro reaches the sea by an estuary bordered by marshes, and the coast south of the southern border of the valley of the Ebro has very few inlets which form good harbours.

Two states arose in these two naturally distinct regions: Castille and Aragon.

The original population of the two states was made up of the same patriarchal races as those of Portugal. In Castille, it is true the people were devoted to the pastoral art rather than to agriculture, while in the other part, Aragon, they were given up to maritime commerce.

Both the states were founded, like that of Portugal, by the knights, in their crusades against the Moors.

Their form of society, then, was very much the same as that of Portugal.

Castille sprang from the little kingdom of Asturias, to which Henry of Burgundy, that Capetian knight, the founder of Portugal, gave his help. At that time (1090) it extended over the Spanish plateau as far as the Tagus. And another prince of the house of Burgundy, Raymond, carried the chivalrous enterprise further by marrying the heiress of the throne.

Aragon really owed its pre-eminence to the country of Barcelona, which at first cut it off from the sea. The country of Barcelona was a French fief like Burgundy, and it was a count of Barcelona, Raymond Bérenger, who married the heiress of Aragon in 1137, and so united his country to the small kingdom of his wife: this union of the two countries is exactly parallel to that of Asturias and Castille, save that there was an interval of about fifty years between them.

The histories of Portugal, Castille, and Aragon are all on very much the same lines. Their histories are really one and the same, and are only divided into separate parts by the fact that the Spanish peninsula is naturally divided: there is the western and oceanic coast (Portugal), the central plateau (Castille), and the valley of the Ebro, with its eastern shore on the Mediterranean (Aragon).

But to continue our history.

Castille, which was shut in by land on all sides, did not have the same opportunities of navigation as Portugal. It was some time before it won, from the Moors on one side and from the Basques on the other, some short stretches of coast-line on the south and the north, which were to some extent favourable to commercial navigation.

Aragon, on the contrary, had a long line of coast, but it

only faced the inland, land-locked sea, the Mediterranean, and not, like that of Portugal, the open sea, the vast ocean. The consequence was that it did not concern itself with unknown lands, but with the old countries of the Mediterranean, with which it traded like all the rest. That is the reason why it developed in a different way from Portugal: instead of creating distant colonies, it formed a European dominion. It won the Balearic Islands from the Arabs (1229), Sicily from Charles of Anjou, the brother of St. Louis and pretender to the lands of the Normans (1282), Sardinia from the Pisans (1323). Later on it acquired the kingdom of Naples, which it also took from the house of Anjou (1435).

Then the day came which saw the two kingdoms of Castille and Aragon united by the marriage of Isabel, heiress of Castille, with Ferdinand the Catholic, King of Aragon (1479). That was the beginning of the kingdom of Spain.

The power that held all the states from the Adriatic to Portugal was not one to be despised. But it soon became still more redoutable.

In studying the development of Germany up to the revival of royal power in Europe, we observed that at the very time when Castille and Aragon were united, Austria had annexed immense estates, also chiefly through marriage. It must be clearly recognised that these marriages were only one of the expressions of the movement towards concentration which was the outcome of the influence of the monarchic idea. But let us make a summary review of the dominions in question: Austria, in the first place, then Bohemia, Silesia, Lusacia, the low countries, Franche-Comté, Milan, and the Tyrol. These formed, as it were, the circumference and occupied nearly the half of Germany. Moreover, thanks to the strength they gained from these annexed countries, the sovereigns of Austria succeeded in keeping in their family the imperial crown, the power of the German Holy Roman Empire.

Now Ferdinand the Catholic and Isabella married their daughter and heiress, Joan the Mad, to the heir of Austria, Philip the Fair; and the offspring of this union, the Emperor Charles v., ruled over the whole of the Spanish, Austrian, and imperial dominions which I have just mentioned.

Possessed of such power, Charles had of course no difficulty

in making himself an autocrat in Spain, where the people were of the patriarchal type and given up to chivalrous adventures. He was not so successful elsewhere, but he triumphed there.

In this way the first great autocratic monarchy of modern Europe was founded.

It was quite natural that this form of the society of ancient times should reappear first in the south, because the Neo-German invasion had not reached it except through the knights, and they never founded any institution capable of enduring. It did not encounter in the south any serious resistance from the particularists. These simple facts explain how it was that Spain suddenly outstripped France in the development of this intense form of monarchy, although royal power had begun to revive in France first. The advance of royal power in France was checked by the strong influence which the particularists had obtained in the country and which continued unshaken in spite of the dissolution of the feudal system.

The history of the great Spanish monarchy is not long. When Charles v. abdicated (1555), he gave his brother Ferdinand the hereditary estates of Austria and the imperial crown, and to his son Philip, who was Philip II., Spain, Italy, the low countries, and the colonies of the New World conquered by Christopher Columbus, Balboa, Cortez, and Pizarro.

Philip II. seemed to display in their most exaggerated forms the intolerance and ambition which inevitably grow up under the system of great monarchies, and he thereby succeeded in draining Spain of men and money. He lost the greater part of his provinces in the low country. His reign is always considered as the type of despotism in modern times ; it had all its passing brilliancy and haunting horrors. The court of Spain had a theatrical setting : vanity, arts, and letters alone prospered ; all the rest was hurried to destruction.

Spain declined still more rapidly under Philip III. and went to pieces altogether under Philip IV. These two were the direct successors of Philip II., to whose faults they added incapacity, another natural consequence of this system of sovereignty. And since then, after nearly two and a half centuries have gone by, the mighty movement which sways the world has done almost nothing but hasten, or further emphasise, the decadence of that unhappy country.

It must be remembered that when Spain was at the height of her apparent greatness she possessed a colonial empire in the finest parts of America, from California and Mexico to Peru and Chili, which was quite as extensive and far richer than her European lands.[1] She managed it as badly as Portugal had managed the lands she had discovered, and for the same reasons, since the fundamental constitution of those two parts of the peninsula was the same. We have already seen that though, owing to her power in Europe, she had been able to lay hands upon the small state of Portugal, she had no idea what to do with the Portuguese colonies, which were already in a state of decadence, and only succeeded in provoking the English and the Dutch by her wars to plunder them and begin their conquest.

So much for the history of the first great European monarchy. It will throw some light on France, the second great monarchy in chronological order, which developed on very much the same lines. Everyone knows how much France was influenced by Spain at the beginning of the seventeenth century.

In the history of France, however, we shall come across a peculiar phenomenon as regards a point which I have already mentioned: monarchy had to struggle against the particularist traditions of the Franks. Here we shall again resume the direct history of the particularist form of society after the digression we have been obliged to make in order to understand all the social forces which bear upon our subject.

We found that royal power in France, in order to regain its vigour, was obliged to rely upon the class of urban manufacturers, who were but newly sprung from the prosperous country-folk. It was with the help of these people who had come from the country, and had enlisted in the communal militias or in the bands of mercenaries, that Philip Augustus began to make for himself a powerful dominion which, apart from what he already possessed, spread right over the north of France from Poitou to Artois. In that way the great territory was formed which furnished monarchy with the most efficacious and most positive means of action.

But monarchy would not have done much if it had merely succeeded, through its conquests, to the rights of the great feudatories, who were strangely shackled, as we saw, by the

[1] See Foncin's *Atlas général*, map 33.

emancipation of the vassals and the enfranchisement of the serfs, or if it had depended on the goodwill of the communes. In fact, we shall presently find it wrestling with this twofold difficulty.

The object of the king's greatest anxiety was money: he had to have money to pay his soldiers, since he wished to do without the feudal army and to defeat it; he had to have money to pay his civil functionaries, since he did not wish to grant fiefs in payment for public offices. In all the lands belonging to his dominions he had two sets of men to represent him, as we have already seen, one superior in authority to the other, the bailiffs or seneschals, and the provosts, who, like the Merovingian counts, were charged with the administration of justice and finance and with the superintendence of the armed forces. Now, it was forbidden that officers should be appointed to posts in the places where they lived, or that they should acquire any land there, or that they or any of their children should be united in marriage to anyone in the place, or, finally, that they should live there for more than three years.

The kings, therefore, could not get on without money. They were soon obliged to complain openly of their poverty and beg for subsidies, which they were not yet able to extort by force.

When events occurred which were likely to rouse the patriotic feelings of the people, they used the opportunity to call together the great landowners, both lay and ecclesiastical, —that is to say, the feudatories, the clergy, and the nobility,— and ask their pecuniary help towards some action which was of interest to all.

That was the beginning of the States-general (*États Généraux*). The communes were also summoned to these meetings, for two reasons: the first was that the part of the land they occupied was under their jurisdiction, they possessed "land," they were lords in their own way; the second, which was still more decisive, was that they had the means of furnishing subsidies, they were the masters of industry, and industry was the most abundant source of wealth.

But it must be observed that the agricultural class did not figure in the general assembly of the owners of land. The people belonging to the communes were entirely from the towns; they represented only the industrial class.

As the result of their enfranchisement, the people living in the country literally owned the land, worked it, held it in perpetuity, and could transmit it at will, but they had to pay an annual rent as the price of their possession. These ground-rents were the great source of income of the feudal lords, the knights, who were thus dispossessed in reality, but nominally remained the proprietors. They had not put up their goods for sale, they had merely put them out on hire: they retained their title of landowners. And that title was necessary to them: (1) because there was "no lord without land," according to the old feudal adage—that is to say, that if it had been known that they had sold their land, all their manorial rights—such as the rights of war, of knighthood, of jurisdiction, of precedence, etc.—would have dropped; they would have found themselves in the position of ordinary men; (2) because they lived on that annual and permanent rent like regular annuitants, certain of an inexhaustible and periodical source of income.

The States-general, then, was composed of the clergy and the nobility, or knights, of the towns or communes; the agricultural class, the workers of the soil, its true possessors, remained completely unrepresented.

The taxes were levied upon land and industries.

The tax or subsidy that was levied by consent upon the land was necessarily paid by those who held it, worked it, and made profit out of it—by the agricultural class. And that class had to pay a subsidy to the king over and above the fixed and immutable rental that it was bound to pay to the lord according to the contract it made upon its enfranchisement. So that the tax which was granted to the king by the lords was paid by the tenants. In this way the one party made the grants, which the other had to pay. This is the first point with regard to which the reader must not fall into the ordinary error of supposing that the institution of the States-general offered securities to the nation.

It must not, however, be supposed that the lords, clergy, or laymen voted for the tax demanded by the king with a light heart, and that nothing but feelings of humanity and conscience made them think twice about it. If the subsidy had burdened the land with a larger tax than it could reasonably pay, the rent—that is to say, the annual payment of rent to the lord—

would have been compromised, the lords would have run the risk of themselves being badly paid by their tenants. They recognised that as the stopping-place, the extreme limit of the tax which they could allow to be levied without obviously injuring themselves. But, furthermore, the tax always tended to injure them a little, imperceptibly, because it impoverished their tenants in a certain measure, and because the lords had a thousand means at their disposal of getting money out of rich tenants, but not out of poor ones. There were, as a matter of fact, a number of favours and small secondary exemptions, which the tenants could obtain from the lords for a sum of money, and which the latter were glad to sell to suitable persons.

The tax or subsidy which was levied upon manufacture was a matter of personal concern to the representatives of the towns. It fell directly upon them—at any rate they felt it far more than their fellow-workers the artisans of the towns; for they were the most important among them, and therefore the most heavily taxed. It was to the interest of many of the members of the assembly that the taxes should fall on the towns by preference, because, owing to their industries, they had an incomparably larger income than the mass of the country-people.

The peculiarly disagreeable situation occupied by the representatives of the towns at the States-general had the effect of making them rather dislike the assemblies, where the disposal of money which they had to furnish themselves was discussed, while the lords, both ecclesiastics and laymen, granted money which was furnished by their tenants rather than at their own expense. It is, therefore, easy to understand the very different aspect the States-general wore in the eyes of the lords and in those of the representatives of the towns.

This explains the attitude which was soon adopted by the towns, when fresh demands for taxes were constantly made by the kings, whose bad administration was to blame. They were thoroughly annoyed at the squandering of money, and offered to direct and manage the States-general, and put the affairs of the country into good order themselves.

Etienne Marcel, the Provost of the Merchants of Paris, was the first leader of that famous movement.

But before we examine what it led to, let us turn our

attention to the flagrant error often made by historians, who represent the peasant, the cultivator, as actually liable to be taxed and to contribute forced labour at will under the feudal system, but as having been liberated by the kings. It is just the contrary! The peasant had freed himself from his obligations to the lord by his own act—that is, by perfecting himself in agriculture by working under his lord when he was developing the land, and by applying that skill to his work on his own land, and thereby growing rich—and he succeeded in reducing his dues to a fixed and immutable rate. When a king appeared on the scenes the peasant began to be oppressed by taxes, he was taxed more and more, and to excess, without being able to do anything, without even being summoned to the council of the nation, where he might have defended his interests and his rights.

It was a very serious matter that the land was no longer in the hands of anyone who employed labour: those lords who were knights employed no labour on the land, nor was their place or office taken by the royal treasury. There was no longer any superior farming class. What a contrast with the state of things under the Franks!

But, further, from the time of the predominance of royal power, the land suffered more from war. The central power has been much praised for having, in the course of its development (and I must add, in order to give itself room to develop), suppressed the so-called private wars. These, however, were powerfully checked by more means than one in the Middle Ages. But it is forgotten how much the general wars, which were far more burdensome and destructive, increased, owing to the revival of the central power. True feudalism, the agricultural feudalism of the time of the Merovingians and Carlovingians, had put a stop to those great uncontrolled political wars, by refusing to take part in them. When royal power was re-established, the wars returned with such frequency and violence, and lasted for such long periods, that the reader wearies of perusing the accounts of them, and the historian is distressed at having to describe them. Even the knights, fond of war as they were, preferred to go far away to fight as a rule, and employed only volunteers, and generally appeared in the field without any other troops.

The revival of royal power, then, did not improve the lot of the country-people. When these points are taken into consideration, there is no need to be surprised that as time went on the central power had to face the very serious question of what measures should be adopted for the revival of agriculture. The constant recurrence of the question in the order of the day is sufficient evidence of the complete inadequacy and inefficiency of the means invented by the royal administration for giving a fictitious life to this important branch of national activity. The two men who are best known as having made persistent and untiring efforts in this direction are Sully and Colbert. There are also occasional indications in history of what a constant anxiety there was to get the country districts to take part in, or to appear to take part in, the representation of the country at the States-general. But no steps were taken beyond these: first of all, certain secondary towns, or even large boroughs, were summoned to the States-general, but they too were aggregations of people in which the industrial population was usually in the ascendant and not the agricultural. Secondly, the rural districts were summoned, but the precaution was taken of mixing their delegates with those of the towns: the delegates of these districts had to join the delegates of the local headquarters, which was the town; in a joint meeting they nominated fresh delegates in the second degree, who betook themselves to the principal town of the neighbourhood, where fresh delegates in the third degree were elected, and joined the direct representatives of the large town in the work of drawing up the "book of recommendations" and definitely appointing joint representatives for the States-general. This shows how the rural element was filtered through the amalgam of town elements.

To return, then, to the towns, which alone took a real part in the States-general, besides the lords, both ecclesiastics and laymen. It was they who, in the bungling administration of the king, attempted to preserve themselves—that is to say, to preserve industries, which were as much menaced by taxation as was agriculture. They were authorised, in so far as they themselves voted the taxes, to lay down the conditions under which they should be imposed, and it was by that means that they tried to organise the State and the Government after

their own fashion. They brought the ideas and capacities of business men, accustomed to calculate and to order their affairs, to bear on the subject.

But they conceived the kingdom as a great commune, as was quite natural, and the idea of the independence of individuals was completely absent from their minds. They laid down principles for the public officials, and failed to appreciate the fact that state service deprives men of personal interests which are the source of some of the best qualities in private life. In private life men are left free to provide spontaneously for their own interests in combination with their fellows.

Whatever direction may have been taken by the reforms they attempted, the towns lacked all means of legal sanction when it came to the question of getting them enforced: so they were nothing more than vain projects. As a matter of fact, they had no power to impose them except when they were assembled by the king, who had made them dependent upon himself as their centre. To add to this, they had no idea of any concerted public action, and had no bond of that kind with one another. We have already mentioned that that was the cause of their inferiority to the Hanseatic towns—that is to say, to the leagued and associated towns—and that this was due to the fact that royal power had revived sooner in France than in Germany, and had immediately shackled the budding communal movement and turned it to its own profit by putting itself at the head of it.

The towns attempted to escape from this situation. At the States-general of 1356, which was summoned for the purpose of paying John the Good's ransom, they attempted to league themselves together with the object of supporting, by this coalition of their forces, some remonstrances they had drawn up, which were more opportune than ever in the face of the palpable blunders the kings had committed. They decided to have Etienne Marcel, Provost of the Merchants of Paris, at their head—that is to say, the leading municipal magistrate of the leading town of France. Etienne Marcel sent round instructions to diverse towns, in his name and in the name of the town of Paris, to organise a general armed rising.

The king simply went over to the side of the lords on finding that he was threatened by the opposition of the communal

militias, which he had at first used to make himself independent of the lords. The lords were delighted to revenge themselves in some way on the communes and to return to the king's favour in some degree.

The leading Parisian merchants were exterminated.

At the same time the rising of the peasants (*la Jacquerie*) took place in the country districts, and it was a strong proof of the extent to which the agricultural class had been excluded from every kind of organisation, that that wild and thoughtless band was led at random, and without knowing where, by the lowest dregs of the people. It can in no way be compared to the methodical rising of the towns. The contrast is enough to show the difference of the condition of these two groups of the population, and how their positions had been reversed.

But it is still more sad that when, eighty years after Etienne Marcel's attempt, a new revolt broke out in Paris, the massacres and disorders of the times proved that the great merchants had disappeared. The movement was headed by the most insignificant artisans and by the University; the men of action were Caboche, with his butchers, flayers, and butcher boys; the spokesmen were the professors of the University. They succeeded no better than Marcel, and it became clear to the towns that they could not arrive at anything through the States-general with only these artisans as their representatives, who, though they were intelligent men with good intentions, had been accidentally diverted from their business to give advice which it was out of their power to support or put into effect.

The conclusion the towns came to was that they must resign themselves and yield to the demands for subsidies which they had no power to refuse. They too had to submit to arbitrary taxation, which became heavier owing to the miserable situations in which the king found himself, thanks to his neglect or his own bad management. From that time industry was as hardly treated as agriculture. The kings used the funds thus provided by the taxes in two ways. They gave the lords pensions, and in that way enrolled them as military officers in their pay: that was the end of chivalry, properly so called, and the beginning of the establishment of a military nobility at court. They further organised a body of officials, also in their

pay, who were purposely chosen from among the townspeople, and through them the kings extended their power as much as they could to every branch of civil life. That was the origin of the bodies of royal functionaries.

It is easy to see the inevitable result of these two institutions. The lords, who found that the military commissions granted by the king, and revocable at his pleasure, gave them good openings and were a source of increase to their income, turned their attention towards the court and court intrigues. The burgesses directed their energies towards securing public offices on finding that they promised a more certain and more profitable career than industry or agriculture.

And it is clear, from a comparison of the two paths followed by these two classes, that it is to the second class, the burgess officials, and not to the first, the nobles of the court, that the power of conducting consistently the organisation, regulation, and government of public affairs must belong.

This is what actually happened. At the States-general which was subsequently summoned, instead of the merchant burgesses as formerly, it was the official burgesses of the king who took precedence of everyone else in the assembly. It was they whom the towns henceforth sent by preference as their representatives, as being more skilled in public affairs than their original representatives could possibly have been, who were merely chosen from the industrial class. It also seemed probable that, in the ordinary pursuance of their duties, they would be better able to carry out, after the dissolution of the States-general, the reforms which they had persuaded the assembly to accept.

But the only reforms which such a set of officials could propose consisted in the perfecting of the royal administration. It was the same for them as for all officials: that was the only direction in which they saw hope of positive and serious improvement. So they were constantly inventing new ways of improving the central administration, and the royal power thereby tended to become better regulated, more methodical, more honest, but also more rigid, more all-pervading, more complicated. Such was the origin of that wonderful administrative machine which our fathers constructed with such care and skill. As for liberty, real initiative, the independence of

individuals, they did not come into the reckoning. The object was to secure good order by means of the administration: that was the sole idea, the only ideal.

So these meetings of the States-general, these national assemblies so much extolled as guaranties of liberty, were really in the hands of the royal burgess officials.

France, then, has passed from the hands of the farming landowners of feudal times to the legists, the children of the towns.

The legists retained their urban character, because the duties they performed for the king fixed them in the towns.

But it was necessary besides to give a proof of intellectual culture in canvassing for these government appointments; it was necessary to have university degrees, or at any rate some certificate of intellectual attainments. So it became obligatory to go to the towns to study. This accounts for the multitude of students who kept pouring into the University of Paris or other universities through which it was advantageous for a man to pass in order that he might have more claims to the posts, the "appointments," than his competitors. That was the connection between the legists and the men of letters. It was also one of the great causes of the influx of the country-people to the towns.

The rapidity with which the number of government appointments multiplied is shown in the continuation of the history of the royal administration. Apart from the number of new posts created for new objects, the original ones were divided and subdivided to infinity. For instance, at first there was the bailiff, who played the part formerly taken by the Merovingian count: he was head of the police, of the courts of law, and of the army, and was tax-gatherer for the king. But soon a special official was created for military service and another to look after the taxes. The bailiff, whose duties were in that way limited to the management of the police and the courts of law, subsequently had a lieutenant-general and then private lieutenants under him. Nor did "progress" stop there.

It is a very strange thing to see how even the most intelligent and liberal historians of that time made mistakes and were never tired of admiring the progress of this central administrative organisation, completely forgetting that the State is not the country, and that the strength of a race does not lie

in the unnatural multiplication of laws. With these writers the history of France ceases to be a history of France, and becomes the history of the royal power and its clever organisation.

But suddenly the vices of the system manifested themselves. It is easy to see that, as the reforms of the States-general were only fine administrative schemes, they had no other guarantee for their execution than the king's good pleasure, for he was the master of the machine of administration and complete master of his staff of officials. So we look on at the singular spectacle of the affairs of France rising and falling according to the good qualities or faults of the king. When the king is good enough to apply the schemes of the legists, good order is outwardly introduced into all branches, which brings certain great results, puts an end to shameful and ruinous squandering, and leads the country gently forward. But soon after the king enters upon some useless and expensive war, decides to create, if you please, offices to be sold in order to make money, without considering the value of the new officials, and the finely finished machine of government cracks and gets out of order, now at this point, now at that.

France thus reverted to the ancient system which the feudal institution of the Franks had ousted.

In the next chapter we shall explain how the rural domains did not recover from the fatal condition into which they had fallen under the management of the agricultural class, which had been neglected by the lords, knights, or court nobles, and had been dominated, like everything else, by the ideas of the legists and the fickle will of an absolute monarch.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE GREAT EUROPEAN MONARCHIES OF MODERN TIMES: FRANCE—*Continued*

IN regaining their power at the natural decline of feudalism, the kings did not attempt to assume the management of agriculture, which had been abandoned to the peasants at the time of their enfranchisement and when chivalry was at its height. They were even less desirous of seeing the rise of a new aristocratic agricultural class drawn, strange as it might seem, from the pick of the peasants. Their organisation of society simply consisted in the creation of a public treasury, into which it was their ambition to pour all the money that they could possibly get by taxing farming, industry, and commerce, with the object of providing money: (1) to pay the non-feudal army attached to the king—that was the main point; (2) to pay the nobles (who were by then deprived of all their resources) annuities, on condition that they should serve the king as leaders of regiments of soldiers and as officials at the court; (3) to pay innumerable civil functionaries chosen from among the burgesses, whose duty it was to levy taxes and administer the king's justice everywhere; (4) to encourage agriculture, industry, and commerce when they should become palpably weakened by the pressure of taxation.

A system of government consisting of a general treasury, into which it is attempted to pour as much money as can be drained from the sources of the country's wealth and by the aid of which the central power attempts to assume to itself all the possible offices in the country, is the completest and most extravagant communal system which can be substituted for the productive system of independent domains.

The opposition between the two systems is obvious at first sight.

The return to the social organisation of the people of olden times was so marked that it began to be thought that the thousand years, roughly speaking, of the Frankish feudal system was, as it were, an interregnum of darkness and trouble in the middle of the system of government by kings. People began to disinter, sometimes with genuine wonder, sometimes with predetermined admiration, those institutions of Roman decadence that could be best adapted to the new government, which was reconstituted in the Romano-barbarian style. So France, which had been strongly founded by the particularist family on the system of the particularist estate, returned to the condition of the communal peoples of the south and of antiquity.

We must now see whether this return to the past was to her advantage.

This can be determined by one observation, which can be made with great precision.

On the one hand, we have noted that at the end of the Middle Ages industry and commerce were very much more advanced in the south than in the north. The advance was due to the traditions of the industrial and liberal arts which had flourished to such an extent among the Greeks and Romans, and which still survived in the Byzantine Empire and in those towns in Italy which had remained in touch with it. Commerce owed its prosperity to the Mediterranean, then the sole route to the East. Venice, and the other Italian republics, her rivals, Portugal and Spain, all illustrated the fact that the ascendency in industry and commerce still belonged to the south. But it was bound to slip from them in the fourteenth century, for the reasons we have already noted.

On the other hand, we know that under the influence of the Franks as owners of estates and feudal lords, agriculture developed in the north with an energy and force which completely transfigured that part of the country and gave it the predominance in Europe and a social and political superiority over even the rich countries of the south. And France was foremost among the nations of the north in this supremacy which was founded upon high farming.

Now what resulted from her reversion to the antique constitution of the peoples of the south ?

1. *France lost her superiority in high farming*, a superiority

which was entirely due to the particularist organisation, and that superiority passed to England, where the particularist system was preserved, as we shall see. France, however, had a tremendous start over England, apart from the fact that her land is both more extensive and more productive.

2. *France did not inherit the industrial and commercial prosperity of the people of the south* : and yet, was she not placed in a very favourable position ? She was their nearest neighbour, and her harbours opened on the three seas : the Mediterranean, the Ocean, and the North Sea. But when she readopted the constitution of the southern peoples, she followed them in their decadence, and the industrial and commercial inheritance of the old communal countries passed to England, which had remained particularist.

I repeat : when France reverted to the antique social organisation, she lost her superiority over the northern countries in high farming, and was unable to take the place of the people of the south as regarded industry and commerce when they decayed.

We shall establish this important fact in detail, by considering in turn, under the revived monarchical system, the three groups of the population which were occupied in agriculture, manufacture, and commerce, and were the outcome of the Frankish and feudal organisation.

One point has already been made : agriculture, industry, and commerce had reached the position of being able to make a bargain with the manorial power in accordance with which they paid a fixed rental, which must necessarily have become less and less burdensome owing to the progress in the art of production and the diminution of the value of money. But they were charged by the monarchic Government to pay, over and above the rental, a tax which was bound to increase according as the king's demands for money increased, which they did without limit, since the royal power gradually tended to manage everything. And agriculture, industry, and commerce actually received back from that tax only what remained when the armed bands had been paid, the lords had received their salaries for military commands or appointments at court, and the innumerable government officials and the king's administrators of justice and finance had been paid. Even then what

remained was not devoted to agriculture, industry, and commerce, except when they were on the verge of ruin, in order to raise them artificially to the standard attained by progressive foreigners, and to make them able to continue paying the tax, which was, besides, always on the increase.

It is easy to understand that such a system was not likely to produce a natural prosperity, and a high standard in agriculture, industry, and commerce, or to give them a good impetus forward.

In order to get an idea of the system, not any longer from its causes, but from its effects, we must examine its results, such as they were.

In fact, we must describe the state of agriculture, industry, and commerce at the time of the growth of the power of royalty.

1. *Agriculture.*

We can appreciate the effect of the royal system of government under which agriculture was carried on, by going back in imagination to one of those periods which were most favourable to it—that is to say, to the period after the restorative reign of Henry IV., after one of those occasions upon which monarchy made all possible efforts to make reparation for the evils it had created in the country districts. We shall continue our observations all through the most prosperous period of monarchy—that is to say, under the Bourbons. The result will be instructive if it does not turn to the advantage of monarchy.

There is no need to dwell on the pains Sully took in using means provided by the State "for ploughing and pasturing, which are," he said, "the two breasts by which France is nourished, the true mines and treasures of Peru." Nor need I dwell on Olivier de Serres, the propagator of artificial pastures, the author of the *Theatre of Agriculture* and the *Husbandry of the Fields*, whose efforts towards agronomic progress were supported by Henry IV., who ordered him to start the culture of mulberries in the royal domains. In short, everyone recognises that the reign of Henry IV. saw a return of prosperity, one of the causes of which was the attention given to the resuscitation of agriculture by his administration. Now "the death of the king and Sully's retirement soon after, exposed all that they had founded to destruction. Mary de Medici, with her petty passions, her narrow prejudices, her circle of Italian

upstarts or councillors of Henry IV., who could be useful instruments, but not leading men in the Government, was incapable of grasping the policy of her husband, and still more incapable of carrying it on. All the principles which had been pursued in the preceding reign were abandoned in domestic as well as foreign policy. The nobles raised their heads again, and coined money stamped with emblems of revolt and representations of civil war, of which the people paid the cost: the millions which Sully had stored up in the cellars of the Bastille disappeared like smoke." [1]

That gives a full idea of the result of this system of government. A king of a different character has merely to come to the throne, and the conditions of national prosperity are entirely upset. Like king, like country! In no matter what history of France, and whatever may be the opinions and prejudices of the author, it is most curious to see to what extent the aspect of the country in each reign corresponds to the personal character of each sovereign.

Henry IV.'s reign rejoiced in a great reputation. That reputation was due to the administrative talents of the prince, but it would be an error to suppose that Henry IV. in any way changed the direction of the onward march of the monarchic system: on the contrary, he fell in with it, and gave it a great impetus forwards.

So, without any cause beyond the change of the ruling sovereign, France relapsed during four years of regency into a state of political anarchy and financial disorder which necessitated the convocation of the States-general, when Louis XIII. came of age, in order to find some remedy.

The assembly of 1614 is most striking evidence of the destitution of agriculture. It demanded with one voice the reduction by one quarter of the dues which had become overwhelming for the people. Savaron was chosen by the assembly of the commons to bear their grievances and make complaint to the king, and he spoke as follows:

"What would you have said, Sir, if you had seen men grazing on grass after the manner of cattle in our land of Guyenne and Auvergne? Would that such strange things, such unheard-of misery in your State, might create in your

[1] Pigeonneau, *Histoire du Commerce de la France*, vol. ii. p. 351.

royal heart a desire, worthy of Your Majesty, to render help in such pressing need! And moreover, all that I have said is so true, that may my property and my appointments be confiscated by Your Majesty, if I am convicted of lying." [1]

Whatever may be the facts upon which this statement of Savaron's was based, there can be no doubt about the deplorable condition of agricultural affairs four years after the rule of Henry IV. and Sully.

It is true that during the new "restorative" reign of Louis XIII. some progress was made; but it is likewise true that under Louis XIV. the wars caused by the king's vanity and ambition caused a relapse into misery, owing to the taxes concerning which the States-general was no longer summoned; and the picture of the peasant drawn by La Bruyère, and corroborated by the courageous statements of Fénelon, form a pendant, less than a century afterwards, to Savaron's "grazer of grass."

If we transport ourselves to the end of the following reign, we shall find things in the state described by Arthur Young in his *Travels in France*. The book is an indivisible whole, and ought to be reproduced here in its entirety: I shall content myself by quoting a few lines: "The quantity of waste land we have come across (in Angoumois) is astonishing," says the traveller: "it seems characteristic of all the land through which we have travelled. Most of the moors belonged to the Prince of Soubise, who refused to sell any part of them. So whenever you come across a great lord, even when he owns millions, you may be sure that his lands are lying fallow. That prince and the Duke of Bouillon are the two greatest landed proprietors in all France, and so far, the only signs of their greatness I have seen are fallow fields, moors, deserts, heaths, and bracken."

Apart from royal management, the lamentable results of which we have just seen, it appears that the burgesses, who drew a regular and increasing income from the public appointments they held from the king, acted as employers with regard to agriculture. It was they, indeed, who gradually bought the lands

[1] Narrative of Florimond Rapine. Cf. Augustin Thierry, *Histoire du Tiers État*, p. 139, and Pigeonneau, *Histoire du Commerce de la France*, vol. ii. p. 351.

of the lords, both large and small; for at the time of which Arthur Young speaks there were only a few lords who were in a position to refuse to sell at all. A robed nobility—that is to say, civil functionaries, administrators of justice and finance, in a word, the legists—had taken the place of the fighting nobility on a number of estates. As early as 1257 the non-nobles had been authorised by the king to acquire the lands of the nobles on payment of a tax, which was to be discharged once for all independently of the price of purchase. But such acquisition did not raise a man to the peerage. Later on, the civil functionaries were exempted from the tax I have just mentioned, an exemption which practically amounted to designating them as the purchasers of the lands which the nobles abandoned, since, owing to this privilege, they could buy them more cheaply than other people. In the end they were also granted the right of being raised to the peerage on paying large sums of money, and from that time officials of that rank were far more tempted than before to buy the lands belonging to nobles, since they could then mix in the society of such nobles as still remained in the country.

That was the process by which the officials of the burgess class took the place of the old class of lords, not only in the exercise of power, but also in the ownership of the feudal domains.

But the new landowners were only poor employers, as regards agriculture: they were utterly incapable of bringing back the independence of the domain, or at any rate its preponderant influence in the State.

(1) They were town-folk: they had been brought up in the towns; in many cases even they had been born there; all their official appointments had been in the towns. Many of them, after having purchased rural property, manors, continued to live in the towns, at any rate for a good part of the year.

(2) They naturally favoured centralisation: had they felt the need of any social transformation which would benefit agriculture, they could not have conceived of it as coming from anywhere but from the authority of the State.

(3) They were not men of enterprise, of private initiative: they had made their fortunes through their public offices, which had been entirely organised and constituted without

their help ; under the influence of the hierarchic system they had learnt only cautious and wary methods of procedure, and were but little accustomed to bold personal speculations open to risks : they were conservative in their methods of agriculture as in everything else.

(4) They were not naturally independent : their ambition to rise in the social scale made them the born imitators of the nobility, so that after having invested their wealth in lands, as far as they could, they tended to spend their incomes in a "lordly" manner—that is to say, in the bad ways employed by the fighting nobility in the time of their decadence.

We now know the history of agriculture in France from the time when it was taken in hand by the particularist agricultural immigrants, when they became large employers of labour in the country, up to the time when it was abandoned to the peasants, who were at first left to themselves, then oppressed by taxation, insufficiently helped by the State, and finally poorly employed by men from the towns, civil functionaries.

Our next step is to see what became of industry under the same system of government, that of the great monarchy, in France.

2. *Industry.*

We know how, when agriculture flourished under the management of the feudal lords of early times, the peasants who had grown rich had bought their liberty, and had severally taken up their quarters on their own holdings, whilst the artisans, since manufacture had also benefited by this prosperity, had detached themselves from the land as their source of livelihood, and had placed their workshops nearer the markets, in favourable positions. In each of these centres the body of artisans attempted, as if they were on a communal estate, to establish by a common understanding the best industrial conditions. That was the origin of the towns in France in the Middle Ages. But their political development and free expansion were shackled by the kings, who made them into centres of government where royal officials held high rank and formed an aristocracy. In foreign lands, where royal power had less influence or was less developed, the industrial element in the towns assumed considerable power, and even dominated the surrounding rural districts. That was especially the case in Italy and Flanders.

In Italy the towns made a great advance upon the other public institutions, because they had been founded a long time back under the Roman government; because they had not been abolished by the rural system of feudalism, which had not seriously made its way into the south; because the industrial arts were cherished by the towns, thanks to their close relations with the Byzantine Empire and the east; and finally, because the Eastern Empire, the sole monarchic power which would have been capable of controlling them at that time, was involved in an active war, and was even victoriously repulsed by the pope. That is why the towns in Italy had a free field before them.

As for the towns of Flanders, the causes of whose prosperity we shall discover later on, they remained safe from the interference of the French kings, owing to their precocious development and their distance away. They were masters of the surrounding country, and ruled by their industrial power. When the kings, beginning with Philip the Fair, positively claimed the right of interfering with the towns, they did not win any advantages over them.

It is therefore certain that in the south as well as in the north, in the countries having the communal form of society as well as in those with the particularist form, the fullest development of industry took place in those countries where the towns had not come under royal power.

The following sketch, taken from Pigeonneau's *Histoire du Commerce de la France*, will give some idea of it: "Not only art and literature, but also industry, commerce, public and private wealth, elegant comforts, luxurious refinements, made Italy at the end of the fifteenth century an object of admiration, envy, and covetousness to the people of the North. The manufacture of velvet, of cloth of gold, of cloth of silver, of silk, had finally spread from Venice and Genoa all over the peninsula to Milan, Florence, Lucca, Naples, Vicenza, Padua, the pottery of Bologna, Castel-Durante, and Urbino, the gold and silver work, the jewellery of Venice, of Florence and Rome, were unrivalled in the East and in Europe. The Venetian lace, although the famous Venetian point was not then invented, eclipsed the renown of the laces of Flanders and Spain. The glass-makers of Murano, the Berovieri, the Ballarini, regular dynasties of artists and inventors, already surpassed those of

Germany; at the beginning of the sixteenth century they discovered the secret of the so-called Venetian mirrors and the secret of the production of false pearls blown out with an enameller's lamp. Venice was the metropolis of the art of printing: from 1472 to 1500 she saw the foundation of a hundred and fifty-five typographic workshops.

"When the noble youths, the comrades of Charles VIII., who had but just escaped from Louis XI.'s rod, were suddenly transported to that enchanted world, when their victorious march had brought them from the Alps to the Sicilian Sea through the splendours of Milan, Florence, and Rome, a positive madness of imitation came upon them after the dazzled astonishment of the first days, an intoxication which recalls that of the Romans after their campaigns in Greece and Asia Minor. What struck their imagination was not so much the brilliancy of art and literature as the magnificence of the dress, the strange fashions, the sumptuous repasts and gorgeous furniture. Charles VIII.'s companions admired the doublets of velvet and satin, the embroidered gloves, the brocaded dresses and the slippers of the Venetian ladies, the mosaic floors and the sculptured ceilings, almost as much as the statues and pictures of the great masters. When the king returns to France, he will take back with him a medley of architects, painters, statuaries, savants, an army of perfumers, of jewellers, of embroiderers, of ladies' tailors, of carpenters, gardeners, organ-makers, and workers in alabaster, whom he will establish at the castle of Amboise." [1] Here again it was the same with industry as with agriculture, the king was obliged to push it forward by his own personal act after he had deprived it of its own initiative. "At the beginning of the sixteenth century industry in France was in no way prepared for this sudden revolution. A few silk factories at Lyons, at Tours, at Nîmes, some glassworks in Argonne, in Agénois, and in Burgundy, admirable enamels at Limoges, some fine sculptured marble at Paris, Rouen, and Tours—that was all that France could produce to compete with the products of Italy. She had no manufacturers comparable to those of Florence, Venice, Rome, or Milan. So the court and the nobility were obliged at first to seek in foreign parts what France could not give them." [2]

[1] Vol. ii. pp. 22–24.

[2] *Ibid.* pp. 59, 60.

All that Charles VIII., thanks to his expedition, had unexpectedly introduced into the order of the day, Francis I., with his artistic tastes and love of magnificence and ceremony, made a regular part of the programme.

Francis the First's reign was marked by the favour he showed to the luxurious arts, to building, furnishing, and the dress of the Renaissance style, borrowed, that is, though with a few changes, from Greek and Roman antiquity, from the south, from Italy. The means he adopted for stimulating French industry were new and have not since grown old, as it appears: he used the system of protection, the more or less complete exclusion of those foreign goods whose manufacture he wished to encourage in France. Under feudalism, it was forbidden to export goods unless it was decided that there was a surplus of produce on the lands of the domain; transport dues were levied, but exclusion of goods was unknown.

Another measure adopted by the king was to create "purveyors to the king" by royal warrant, outside the corporations. These privileged manufacturers could practise their craft and open a shop wherever the king stayed; they were not subject to the trade regulations, and had only to answer for their commercial dealings before the king or his private representatives. It was indeed a case of the king directing commerce at his pleasure.

But the king stirred up more formidable competitions than the Italians in his endeavour to revive industry: he kept on increasing and selling public appointments, which more and more withdrew from industry the pick of its workers. "From the beginning of the sixteenth century," says Pigeonneau, "venality spread to all the financial offices and soon to the appointments in the courts-of-law; they were multiplied without limit, divided into two, three, or four in order that there might be more to sell: that was the resource which was always ready in urgent cases, which paved the way for the paper currency of the *ancien régime*. It was remarked some time after by a courtier: 'How is it that when His Majesty creates an office, God always simultaneously creates a fool to buy it?' Were the sons of merchants and artisans, who found the means to buy not only the wherewithal to satisfy their self-love, and the more serious privileges attached to the

performance of public duties, but also the real power, which had almost entirely slipped out of the hands of the born nobility, were they as foolish as the gentleman implied? From the sixteenth century the government and administration of the kingdom was carried on by burgesses, under the name of state councillors, king's secretaries, members of supreme courts, judges of the inferior courts, long-robe bailiffs, treasurers of France, judges of the elections (*i.e.* of certain areas into which France was divided in ancient times), and public and private collectors; it was they who were observed, as Claud de Seissel put it (1450–1520), buying up the inheritances and manors of the barons and noblemen who were reduced to such poverty that they could not keep up the appearances of nobility. Unhappily, this epoch also saw the rise of two scourges which the Revolution was powerless to stamp out in France: the plague of 'officialism,' and disdain for industrial and commercial careers.

"We shall never again see, as in the Middle Ages, any of those dynasties of merchants, the Arrodes, the Popins, and the Piz d'Oe of Paris, the Colombs of Bordeaux, the Pigaches of Rouen, who, even when they had become heads of the municipality and councillors of sovereigns, did not blush to continue their business and hand it on to their children; commerce and industry are forbidden for officials as well as gentlemen; at the most they may be allowed to engage in maritime commerce on a large scale which even the nobility can carry on without degradation. As soon as anyone has the smallest fortune his only ambition is to get out of the class of merchants and tradespeople who have no position in the state: to remain in it, is as much as to confess that one is too poor to buy an appointment or too ignorant to carry it on. The contempt of the counter and the workshop is an hereditary evil with us: it is one of the still surviving prejudices of ancient society." [1]

But the still stronger attraction of public offices to positive people like manufacturers, was that they offered a sure and regular income, tending to increase with time and advancement; whereas industry, when it was kept under the royal thumb by taxes and ordinances, was an ill-assured means of profit, and was exposed to bitter mortifications when the kings withdrew

[1] Pigeonneau, *Histoire du Commerce de la France*, pp. 174–177.

the help by means of which they had tried to compensate it for the evils they had caused. The capriciousness of royal intervention, which we noted with regard to agriculture, is reproduced, as we should expect, in the case of industry.

Let us glance at a few more lines of this instructive history :

"In spite of the misery which appeared in some parts, France under Francis I. (whose efforts in favour of industry we have noted) and under Henry II. had been prosperous : even the nature of the complaints to which the States-general gave utterance in 1560 prove that if the nation recognised abuses and deplored them, it was not a prey to those acute sufferings which were described with such eloquence in the deliberations and recommendations of the States-general of 1484."

So far, so good ; but let us turn over the page.

"Thirty years later, what had become of that industry which used to compete with that of Italy and Flanders ? We cannot enter into the bloody history of the three last Valois, we can only state the results : the work of a century was undone in a few years, and France placed in almost as disastrous a position as that from which Charles VII. and Louis XI. had rescued her a hundred years before." [1]

Is this sufficiently clear ? Everything moves in accordance with the movement originated by the kings, and that movement is never continuous and cannot be sustained.

"The correspondence of the Venetian ambassadors—and what authoritative weight there is in historical documents ! —the correspondence of the Venetian ambassadors, which under Francis I. and Henry II. bears witness on every page to the grandeur and wealth of France (however, we know the weak side of it), mentions the universal misery with a sort of stupefaction. 'The clergy are ruined,' wrote John Correro in 1569, 'the nobles are in a bad way ; the country-people have been so plundered and preyed upon by the sheriff's officers that they have scarcely the wherewithal to cover their nakedness. Only the burgesses and the members of Parliament have gold in plenty.' The Venetian envoys were right in saying that the burgesses—that is to say, the tradesmen in the towns—still escaped ruin : but let us wait for the end ; it is not far off.

[1] Pigeonneau, *Histoire du Commerce de la France*, pp. 178, 179.

"As was the case in the Hundred Years' War, the towns suffered less than the country districts; behind their walls they could brave the attacks of isolated bands which were the peasants' scourge. The manufacture of articles of luxury which had been stimulated by Francis I. continued even in the midst of the perils of war (the wars of religion); in spite of the financial embarrassments of the king and the treasury, the court was more brilliant than ever: Henry III. spent 1,200,000 crowns upon a single pageant. The brilliant and prosperous France of the first half of the sixteenth century outlived herself. Her sudden progress, which was in some degree only the result of an unnatural development, at last ceased; her factitious prosperity vanished: industry foundered like agriculture. At the end of the reign of Charles IX., the exodus of artisans who went to Germany, Lorraine, Geneva, and even Italy, to seek the quiet and the work which they no longer found in France, began afresh, as in the fifteenth century. In 1588 the manufacture of cloth diminished by a quarter; the silk factories at Orleans were ruined; at Amiens six thousand workmen were living on charity. At Paris, it was found necessary in 1574 to open public workshops in order to give employment to vagabonds and beggars who encumbered the streets, etc." [1]

The working of this terrible piece of machinery created in the main by the kings, is admirably described in the pages which we have just quoted from the incontestable historian. They give the general expression of the facts; they describe not a mere episode, but the constantly recurring results of the system of government. If we turn to the pages following, we shall find an exact repetition of the beginning.

In dealing with agriculture, I mentioned the attempts made by Henry IV. and Sully to revive it: here we are dealing with industry, but the result is the same: "What projects and hopes Ravaillac's dagger destroyed in a flash: Henry IV.'s task was far from being completed: industry was recovering from the exhaustion of thirty years, but could not yet walk with a firm step. The king's death, and, soon after, Sully's retirement, exposed to destruction everything they had founded: the workshops at the Louvre were closed; the factories built in

[1] Pigeonneau, *Histoire du Commerce de la France*, pp. 182–184.

Paris by Henry IV. were abandoned ; the canal works at Briare were suspended, etc. etc." [1]

Sully, by the way, had been much less favourable to the industrial arts than to "ploughing" and the "pastoral art." He considered that the majority of the prominent trades of that time produced luxuries, and declared that France "was not a suitable place for such baubles."

Thus, matters were carried on according as it suited the life and opinions of a single man, namely, the king or his minister.

There can be no better illustration of that fact than the new impetus given to industry by Colbert under Louis XIV. and the fresh disaster which followed. Colbert's idea was to make France produce all that she bought from the foreigner : that was another instance of a scheme based on theories and evolved by a single brain. Sully's idea was that people should be content to buy from foreigners what could be less easily produced in France.

Whatever history of Louis XIV. the reader opens, he will see not that such and such an industry prospered, thanks to the initiative of such and such a manager of the trade ; not that foreign workmen came to settle in France of their own accord, because they found there a free and open field for development of trade ; but that *Colbert endowed France* in turn with the manufacture of Venetian glass, of Venetian lace, of Italian silk fabrics, crêpes, taffetas, velvets, damasks, and brocades ; of Dutch cloths, of English worsted and knitted woollen stockings, of English tempered steel, which was a secret among the English ; of German tin, of which there had hitherto been only one factory in France, etc. It was Colbert who did all this : one would imagine that he was the general contractor for all the trades, instead of merely the general superintendent of finance. He was supported in this undertaking only by the workmen whom he had himself chosen abroad and bought with the royal funds in order to teach methods of work : when they demanded higher pay or became useless, he sent them back where they came from, as if they were people in his own employment.

However much evidence historians may bring to show how

[1] Pigeonneau, *Histoire du Commerce de la France*, pp. 350–352.

well Colbert's undertaking prospered, we are undeceived when we come upon the results of his policy as described by the same historians. Here is Chéruel's brief version: "Unfortunately," he says, "the death of Colbert and the ascendency of Louvois brought with them the decadence of French industry." [1] Here again, then,—I am tired of repeating it,—we find the fate of industry in France bound up with the life or success at court of a single man! Colbert died in 1683: as early as 1698 the memoranda made by the superintendents of the "Generalties" (*i.e.* of the districts into which France used to be divided in order to facilitate the collection of taxes, etc.) declare that "the silk manufacture, which had employed as many as 20,000 workmen in Touraine, and double that number of women and children, already employed only 4000 hands of both sexes; instead of 8000 trades, only 1200 could be counted. Lyons, which had boasted 18,000 trades in the time of Colbert, had lost more than three-quarters of them." And a very learned historian, and a great admirer of Colbert, adds: "It was the same in almost all the branches of industry." [2]

But I have not yet mentioned all the work undertaken by that famous minister. He attempted to regulate the whole of industry by introducing in its entirety the system of corporations, which were to be kept, by the way, in a state of complete dependence on the king. He drew up a decree in 1678 enacting that "those who make arts, or commerce, or the manufacture of commodities, their profession, and do not belong to any commune, shall form themselves into corporations, communities, and brotherhoods, and statutes shall be granted them." Now, that the feeling of the working class was entirely opposed to this step which was forced upon them is shown by the fact that as early as 1614, sixty years before, at the last meeting of the States-general before that of 1789, the commons had demanded something which was alarmingly like industrial liberty, namely:

"That the trades which, since 1576, have been organised in corporations under masters or wardens may be freely practised" (quite contrary to Colbert's decree);

"That the merchants and artisans, whether they belong to

[1] *Dictionnaire des Institutions de la France*, V., "Industrie."
[2] Chéruel, *ibid.*

a trade that has a corporation, or to any other, should not have to pay dues in order to be received as masters of their trades or to set up shops, or to do anything else connected with their profession ;

" That all commercial or industrial monopolies granted to private individuals should be abolished ;

" That the customs between one province and another should be suppressed."

It is clear from this how far Colbert diverted industry from the path of its natural development, and made it run counter to what it wisely felt was best for it. But so strong is the illusion caused by our conventional history, that a " new man," a Liberal like Augustin Thierry, who records these facts at full length, writes notwithstanding : " If there is such a thing as a science of the management of public interests, Colbert is the founder of it among us." Such a statement makes us wonder if we are dreaming. It is an instance of a man absorbed in admiration for the administrative machine, and forgetting to take into consideration the laws of the social organism.

So we have to modify in an extraordinary degree the ideas that have been put before us of industrial as well as of agricultural prosperity in France under the government of the great monarchy. But what is positive and undeniable is that every page of this part of our history asserts that France was behind Italy and Flanders as regards industry. The French Government under the monarchy seemed to be constantly trying to catch up other nations who had made progress spontaneously and had not been restrained by a monarchic government. It sometimes succeeded, but only for a short space, for this reason, that its success was based only upon factitious means and upon the supreme power of a single man.

These observations upon agriculture and industry cannot but be confirmed by a study of commerce properly so called, to which we are now coming.

3. *Commerce.*

Philip the Fair was the first king of the great monarchy to strike a blow at commerce, and he is the first typical potentate after the revival of royal power. The fairs of Champagne were great European fairs : Philip the Fair, swayed merely by a desire to show his authority, quarrelled with Flanders, and

imagined he was delivering a master stroke when he forbade the Flemish to come to the fairs of Champagne. It was there that the Flemish met the Italians: when the Flemish came no more, the Italians went to look for them elsewhere, and their defection soon after caused that of the Germans. France ceased to be the great market for which she was naturally designed by her intermediate position between those nations whose commerce was prosperous. "The Italians renewed their intercourse with the Flemish, which had been stopped by land, by sea; in that way they laid the foundations of the wonderful prosperity of Anvers, which was situated where the two largest commercial currents of Europe met—namely, that which came from the south by the vessels of Venice, and that from the north and the centre by the Hanseatic fleets and the boat-service of the Rhine." [1]

The water-ways traced by the rivers, the roads, the toll-gates, all of which were of very great moment to commerce, often came under the consideration of the royal government. There again, we realise that everything was done by "jerks," by resolutions that came too late, after commerce had got into lamentable difficulties. The schemes that were formulated at that time were wonderful, but the execution of them lagged far behind, and we are forced to imagine that at the end of a few years everything had to be begun all over again.

When historians observe the more and more regular, symmetrical, and systematic forms adopted by the internal organisation of the government, they admire the fair order of it, and forget that three-quarters of the time it only exists in writing or hardly lasts at all in practice: they do not go to results. The greatest mistake they make is to find coherence in that administration; the disturbances that constantly interrupt it in its work prevent all coherence; the only coherence there is, is in its schemes, which are always directed towards royal domination as the terminating point.

We have reason, then, to modify the praises bestowed upon the administration of that period as regards means of communication. When commerce is left its liberty, it is better able to open up roads for itself or to overcome successfully the obstacles it meets on its path. The Hanseatics crossed

[1] Pigeonneau, *Histoire du Commerce de la France*, p. 11.

the seas, journeyed up and down the streams and rivers, crossed the land wherever need was, without being stopped by a number of material difficulties, or by attacks of pillagers, or by the excessive tolls levied by the lords: the reason was that they had developed freely, had adopted useful measures of their own accord, and were careful to see them enforced. But there are similar examples even in France: in great marine enterprises where liberty was more easily retained, the history of two celebrated Frenchmen shows us what simple private men could achieve when left to themselves: I mean James Cœur and Ango. In those bygone days they accomplished things that would have astonished us even in the last century. But, as everyone knows, the prosperity of the former was nipped by Charles VII. and that of the latter by Francis I. Other men of less renown than James Cœur and Ango succeeded in making their way as their own masters along the same broad road of maritime commerce and colonisation. The common people—Normans, Bretons, Picards, Rochellais, Marseillais—began to dispute the possession of the new lands with Spain and Portugal, which claimed the rights of possession and the right of dividing them among themselves. But Francis I. thought it necessary to yield to the demands of those powers, and forbade the French to settle in the New World. Nevertheless, "people of Rouen and Dieppe continued to trade with Brazil and Africa (Portuguese territory), and to avenge themselves as best they could for the aggressions of the Portuguese. John Ango evaded the prohibition by declaring that his vessels were bound for lands where no Christian had ever set foot; others did not even take the trouble to evade the law, and contented themselves with making false declarations and buying the silence of the officials. In 1579, 1580, and 1581, whole squadrons, sometimes numbering eighteen vessels, used to set out from Dieppe, Havre, Rouen, La Rochelle, bound for Brazil. Unfortunately, the Spanish Government appeared as pig-headed as the French merchants. It sent out fleets to oppose our squadrons, armies to oppose our bands of adventurers; all the forces of the most powerful empire in the world to oppose the daring efforts of plain private men."

And here let me quote the authoritative conclusion drawn by the author I have just quoted, whom I have the good fortune

to know personally, and who is an authority on every subject, and is free from all suspicion of partiality: "*The nation therefore must not be blamed for our failures.* In America, in Africa, and in the far eastern seas, *the nation had preceded the State and shown it the way; the State did not follow it. The kings,* who were entirely absorbed in their internal affairs or their ambitious policy in Europe, had only paid attention in a distracted and intermittent manner to discoveries, and distant commerce, and colonial enterprises. *They did not even leave them alone.* Francis I. forbade his own subjects to lay claim to Portuguese territory." [1]

We must follow matters to the end. Our object is to go through the great epochs of monarchy: after Francis I. we come to Henry IV. What happened to commerce then?

"France could no longer dream of disputing with the Spaniards their empire in the Antillas, Mexico, South America, which had lasted almost a century, or even their more recent conquest in Florida. The English had taken possession of Newfoundland, and were trying to get footing in Virginia. The Dutch were about to settle in the countries which, for more than half a century, bore the name of New Belgium, and which correspond to New York State of the present day. The Gulf of St. Lawrence, on the contrary, though it was frequented by Dutch and English fishermen, was considered as the peculiar domain of France from the time of James Cartier and Roberval. In that way French marine traders were attracted to Canada. But Henry IV. was not wise enough to uphold strongly the rights he had granted over the lands that were called French to the small companies which were then formed. The colonies disappeared when their privileges were withdrawn. So we have the same instability in commercial enterprises owing to the omnipotence and shiftiness of the royal administration. There is nothing which so well illustrates this point as M. Léon Gérin's splendid essays on the early days of Canada." [2]

[1] Pigeonneau, *Histoire du Commerce de la France*, pp. 151, 171.

[2] *La Science Sociale*, vol. xi. pp. 320, 526; vol. xii. pp. 161, 544; vol. xiii. p. 519; vol. xiv. p. 374; vol. xv. p. 426; vol. xvi. p. 296; vol. xvii. p. 318; vol. xviii. p. 417.

After Henry IV., Richelieu made an effort to recover what had been lost. It was in vain, and for the same reason.

"He failed in his projects in the Levant. He only half succeeded in Northern Africa. In the Antillas, where French colonisation had assumed proportions beyond the highest hopes, we owe thanks to the genius which inspired the Norman race, and to the initiative of the emigrants rather than to the Government and the companies. Richelieu's companies, some of which were too ambitious, while others were too modest, never got further than the mere outline: they were hampered as much as they were supported by the permanent intervention of government, they never shook off the leading-strings, and had not learned, like the great foreign companies (English and Dutch), to do without the State." [1]

Under Louis XIV., or, more correctly, "under Colbert," a new effort was made. But commerce encountered the same check as industry had done. At first the results were brilliant; then, soon after, when Colbert was brushed aside and Louvois conducted the war, the finances, the navy, and commerce were overwhelmed in the same ruin. In vain did France receive the new domain of Louisiana as the result of the explorations of Cavalier de La Salle in 1682; in vain did she find herself the possessor of rights extending from the glacial regions to the Gulf of Mexico, over all North America to the west of the Alleghanies, owing to the settlements the French had made in Canada, and to La Salle's first expedition to reconnoitre the course of the Mississippi: scarcely had a century elapsed when all these possessions had passed to England, together with the supremacy in agriculture, industry, and commerce.

Besides, it must be observed that even if France had been able, in spite of the restraint put upon her by the Government, again to arouse a spirit of enterprise in the best of the sailors and merchants engaged in maritime commerce far away from her frontiers, she could not have created the same energy in the class that was fixed to her land: she lacked agricultural colonists; and that was the reason why the results of the bold enterprises of the merchants over-seas were so poor even at the best of times: they could scarcely induce anyone but vagabonds and criminals to enlist for the new countries. We cannot

[1] Pigeonneau, *Histoire du Commerce de la France*, pp. 454, 455.

wonder at it after having seen that France showed the first signs of her decadence, under the domination of the Government, in her agriculture. There is not, there never was, and the order of social facts has determined that there never will be, any enduring colonial commerce for a nation that does not produce vigorous agricultural colonists. We find at the end of our analysis that this is the first cause of the decline of the wonderful Frankish nation: the loss of the independence of the estate and of its social and political supremacy.

It remains for us to see how the Revolution strengthened in more than one respect the tendencies of the social system which the great monarchy had built up in France.

We shall then terminate our study of the great monarchies by examining the new German Empire.

CHAPTER XXVII

THE GREAT EUROPEAN MONARCHIES OF MODERN TIMES: THE CONNECTION BETWEEN THE *ANCIEN RÉGIME* AND THE REVOLUTION

THE French Revolution, contrary to the received dictum, was not, in the strict sense of the word, a *social* revolution: it did not fundamentally modify the anti-particularist type, which was reconstituted in France under the great monarchy.

One of its serious faults was that it put people on the wrong track in this respect: that explains most of the many mistakes which it has caused for more than a century. The Revolution has been celebrated as the decisive entry of the country into the rank of the nations for whom a future is in store; but, in spite of the success of some of its great political and legislative reforms, it did not really succeed in diverting the spirit of the French from the communal form of society into which they had lapsed since the natural dissolution of the feudal system; and from this point of view the famous words of the Duke of Rochefoucauld-Liancourt to Louis XVI. with regard to the taking of the Bastille can be truly applied to it, that it was more of a revolt than a revolution.

The fact that the Revolution carried on the old system of administration only too completely is made apparent to-day to many people of different opinions by public utterances, but historians, serious observers, could not have failed to remark it for some time past, whatever may have been their former prejudices. I need only quote the great example of the parallel works of Tocqueville and Taine, masters who came from very different schools.

In order to continue our method of analysing social facts, let us find out the exact reason why the Revolution came as a sequel to the old administration without making any real

break in its continuity, and why it did not abandon, after all, the system of government of the great European monarchies of modern times.

The two powers which had contended with each other under the names of feudalism and royalty were in reality the particularist *agricultural domain* and the *public treasury*. An examination of the final position, relatively to each other, in which these two conflicting forces were placed, will show us how the monarchy merged into the Revolution.

In the first place, let us look at the condition of the *agricultural domain*, which had long ceased to be particularist, as we know.

The evidence on this point is abundant; let us take some of the most important witnesses:

In 1740, Massillon, Bishop of Clermont-Ferrand, writes at Fleury: "The people in our country districts live in a terrible state of misery, without beds, without any furniture: the greater part of them are half the year without barley bread and oat bread, which are their sole form of food, and which they are obliged to take from their own mouths and from the mouths of their children to pay the taxes. Every year I have to suffer the anguish of seeing this miserable spectacle in my visits. In this respect the negroes of our islands have an infinitely happier lot, for, in return for their work, they are clothed and fed as well as their wives and children, whereas our peasants, who are as hard-working as any in the kingdom, cannot get bread enough for themselves and their families and the wherewithal to pay the taxes, even with the hardest and most persistent work."

It may be objected that that happened in Auvergne, which was a poor province. But look at the country round Paris, in Touraine, and in Normandy.

In the neighbourhood of Paris: "In my country district, ten miles from Paris (it is not very far!) I find," writes Argenson, "the spectacle of misery and the continual complaints more than redoubled. What then must be the condition of our unfortunate provinces in the heart of the kingdom? My vicar tells me that eight families, who were living on the produce of their labour before my departure, are now begging their bread. Employment cannot be found; the rich people are

cutting down their expenditure proportionately, like the poor; and at the same time the taxes are collected with a more than military sternness. The tax-collectors, accompanied by sheriff's officers and locksmiths, open the doors, carry off the furniture, and sell it all for a quarter of what it is worth; and the expenses exceed the dues." And elsewhere: "Paris swarms with beggars; one cannot stop at a door without ten ragamuffins coming up to shout at one. It is said that they are all country-people who would no longer endure the trials they undergo there, and have come to take refuge in the town." [1]

In Touraine: "I am now staying at my estates in Touraine," Argenson writes elsewhere. "The poor inhabitants have gone through all the stages of wretchedness and misery, and are now in a state of despair. Their only wish is to die, and they avoid having children." (This reminds us of the speech made by the Peasant from the Danube.) "From what my neighbours say, the population seems to be diminished by more than one-third. The day-labourers all make up their minds to go and take refuge in the small towns. There are numbers of villages that are entirely deserted. But the impositions always go on just the same. The expenses of the collecting of the rates and taxes every year amount to half as much again as the taxes. One of the judges of the court of the election came to the village where my country house is, and said that the dues in this parish ought to be very much increased this year; that he had noticed the peasants here were heartier than elsewhere; that he had seen feathers of chickens on the steps before the doors, and judged that the people were making good cheer within. . . . That is what discourages the peasants and causes misery in the kingdom." The contest between the agricultural domain and the public treasury is only too clearly indicated by these direct pieces of evidence, which were not drawn up to make a case.

Argenson learns the state of things in Normandy. "At Rouen and in Normandy," he writes, "even the people that are the most well-off have difficulty in getting bread to live upon; the generality of the people are entirely without it, and are reduced, in order to avoid dying of starvation, to making up food that would horrify the ordinary human being.

[1] Taine, *L'Ancien Régime et la Révolution*, p. 435.

There are more than twelve thousand workmen begging at Rouen. A man who knows all about finance told me that more than two hundred families left Normandy this year through fear of the gathering of taxes in their villages." History bears witness to revolts in that province alone in 1725, 1737, 1739, 1752, 1764, 1765, 1766, 1767, 1768, which were all due to lack of bread. Even the Parliament of Normandy is witness that "whole hamlets, which were lacking all the necessaries of life, were obliged, in their need, to descend to animals' food." [1]

This state of things was so flagrant, that it was recognised and attested by even the agents of the royal administration, by its highest functionaries in the provinces, and by the governors.

The Governor of Bourges declared that a large number of farmers had sold their furniture; that whole families had passed two days without eating; that in several parishes the starving people remained in bed the greater part of the day so as to suffer less.

The Governor of Orleans summed up his opinion in these words: "The cry of want cannot be reproduced; it is necessary to see the misery of the country districts with one's own eyes in order to get some idea of it."

From Riom, La Rochelle, Limoges, Lyon, Montauban, Caen, Alençon, French Flanders, and Moulins, the governors sent similar news.

The Governor of Dijon wrote: "In Burgundy, near Châtillon-sur-Seine, the taxes, manorial dues and tithes, and the expenses of agriculture consume between them the produce of the land and leave nothing for the miserable labourers, who would have abandoned their fields had not two Swiss contractors, manufacturers of painted cloths, come to scatter over the country forty thousand francs of ready money per annum." [2]

So the same thing happened over again as had happened in Gaul under the system of government of the imperial treasury before the arrival of the Franks. The land was deserted, owing to the impossibility of paying the taxes; but the royal administration, following the example of that of the Romans, opposed this, the last means of libera-

[1] Taine, pp. 435, 436. [2] *Ibid., passim.*

tion, and continued to hold the landowner, at any rate in certain cases, responsible even for the payment of the dues. At the Provincial Assembly of Upper Guyenne held in 1784, it was said "that the lot of the most heavily taxed communities of peasants was so severe that on several occasions proprietors had been found to abandon the land. Who did not remember how the inhabitants of Saint-Sernin abandoned their property as many as ten times, and were threatening to adopt that painful resolution again when they appealed to the Government? Some years before, the inhabitants, the lord of the manor, and the tithe owner of the community had combined together to abandon the (peasant) community of Boisse." And Taine adds: "The desertion would be still greater if the law did not forbid all those liable to pay taxes to abandon an overtaxed property, unless they renounced at the same time all that they possessed in the same community." [1] "A quarter of the soil," says a contemporary, "is purely waste land. The moors and heaths, more often than not, form huge deserts, and cover thousands of acres." One has only to go through Anjou, Maine, Brittany, Poitou, Limousin, Marche, Berry, Nivernais, Bourbonnais, Auvergne, to see that half those provinces are heaths covering immense flat areas which might all be under cultivation. Sologne, which was prosperous in former days, has become a marsh and a forest. A hundred years back it produced three times as much corn; two-thirds of its mills have disappeared; not a trace is left of its vineyards; heather has taken the place of the grapes. The Agricultural Society of Rennes declares that two-thirds of Brittany are waste land.[2]

It seems clear that, in this state of things, the great landowners were going to their ruin as fast as the farmers and metayers. "Everywhere one sees deserted and ruined châteaux; all the manor houses on the fiefs which were formerly inhabited by a class of nobles who were comfortably off are now occupied by poor shepherd farmers who scarcely produce enough by their scant labour to provide themselves with food and to pay what dues still remain, for they have mostly disappeared owing to the ruin of the landowners and the desertion of the cultivators. In the election of Confolens, such and such an

[1] Taine, pp. 439, 440.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 442.

estate that was leased out in 1665 for £2956, in 1747 does not let for more than £900 : it is therefore worth less than a third, less still if allowance is made for the depreciation of money. On the borders of Marche and Berry a certain estate which in 1660 honourably supported two noble families, is nothing more now than a small unproductive farm ; on all the heaths in the neighbourhood can still be seen the traces of furrows which were once made by the ploughshare." [1]

A comparison with England at that same period shows up to a terrible extent the agricultural decline in France, which had been the land of agriculture *par excellence*. Arthur Young, in 1787 in his *Travels in France*, calculates that an acre of land in England yields 28 bushels of corn, and in France 18 ; that the total amount of produce from land of the same kind and in the same space of time is worth 36 pounds sterling in England, and only 25 in France. He comes to the conclusion that "those who live in France by their labour in the fields—and they form the greater part of the population—are 76 per cent. less well off than in England, and 76 per cent. worse fed, worse clothed, worse treated in health and in sickness." "No Englishman who has not left his country," he says elsewhere, "can picture to himself the appearance of the majority of the French peasants."

The deplorable inability of agriculture to get recruits for its service resulted, in many places, in the substitution of metayers (*i.e.* farmers who pay one-half of the produce to the owner of the land) for ordinary farmers (paying rent) : "In seven-eighths of the kingdom there are no farmers—only metayers : the peasant is too poor to undertake agriculture, he has no capital for farming." The landowner is even obliged to advance him the money for his food till the first harvest. That is another striking point of contrast with England, where the system of ordinary farming flourished.[2]

Whilst one part of the domains was left to go to waste, and another was given up to miserable metayers, a third was frittered away in small plots which the lords sold when they came to the end of their resources. But the purchase of these plots exhausted the savings of the better-to-do among the country-people, who were as powerless as the poor metayers

[1] Taine, *ibid*.

[2] See Taine, pp. 443-446.

to pay for the costs of cultivation. "Agriculture such as is carried on by our peasants (landowners)," says the Marquis of Mirabeau, "is terrible drudgery. They perish by thousands in infancy, and when they reach manhood they try to get employment everywhere except where they should be." About 1760 it is estimated that a quarter of the land had been in this way split up into small fragments without any profit to any of the parties interested, for the expenses that fell upon the small purchaser overwhelmed him, and the money the lord gained from the alienation of his property often went to pay the dues for the rest of his estate. In 1772 the Governor of Caen, when collecting the land-taxes, calculated that of 150,000 assessments "there were perhaps 50,000 whose value did not exceed five sous, and perhaps as many which did not exceed 20 sous."

It is easy to picture the state of the domain: (1) immense stretches of land lying waste, formerly fertile; (2) small cultivated fields, let out to metayers, poor half-starved men, which brought in to the lord only a very small profit when once the taxes had been paid; (3) scanty plots of land in the possession of indigent owners.

We have already seen something of the great exodus, which was the reverse of the movement set up by the Franks, and brought the population of the country districts to the towns; but let us look at it now that it has been carried to the extreme.

For the nobility, all the favours, all the advantages (and they were great) were at the court, and consequently at Paris and Versailles. "Sire," said M. de Vardes to Louis XIV., "absence from Your Majesty makes one not only unhappy, but also ridiculous." The only members of the nobility who were left in the country were those who were too poor to think of going to Versailles to try their fortune. The finest château in a pleasant situation was considered "a hideous desert"; no one was to be seen there "except extraordinary people from the small towns, or rustics from the villages." Here again is a strong contrast with what was going on in particularist England. "Exile," says Arthur Young, "is the only thing which forces the French nobility to do what the English do by preference: to live on their estates in order to beautify them." "Every man in the kingdom who owns lands of any considerable extent,"

says the Marquis of Mirabeau, "is at Paris, and consequently his houses and castles are neglected." [1] The registers of the poll-tax give an authentic proof of this fact: the poll-tax was collected at the actual place of residence; now, this tax was entered at that time as being collected from all the greater nobility and a part of the smaller at Paris.

We know what brought the common people to the towns. Those who were capable of making their way up, who, in spite of hard times, had been able to make some small profits, hastened to leave the country where well-to-do peasants hardly stayed for more than one generation; they came to the towns to obtain one of those appointments in the royal or municipal administration which, however small they might originally have been, had by degrees had some exemptions from taxes attached to them. For everything pivoted, so to speak, upon this terrible system of taxation which drained the resources of the country. Those who had lost everything went to the town to beg, for that was where everyone went by preference who had anything to give. But for those who were not officials or beggars the town offered no better refuge than the country from the difficulties of life: the burden of taxation was thrown back as much as possible upon the artisan and the merchant, as it was elsewhere on the peasant. The functionaries and men of importance among the burgesses had got into the habit of not summoning the people, and met by themselves to discuss public affairs, and tried to lay upon the shoulders of others the burden of taxation that weighed upon the town; they usually levied the taxes for the town upon articles of indispensable use, of which the people, owing to their larger numbers, used more, and of which a rich man often used much less, because he lived on other things.

Such was the state of things to which the communistic system of monarchy had reduced the estates that were formerly particularist; it had destroyed their independence, prosperity, and influence in a very large degree.

We have still to examine the condition of the public treasury, which formed the basis of the royal government and absorbed all the country's resources. Figures will tell the story.

"If," says Taine, "Normandy, Orléanais, Soissonnais,

[1] Taine, p. 58.

Champagne, the Isle of France, Berry, Poitou, Auvergne, Lyonnais, Gascony, and Upper Guyenne, are put together, it will be found that out of 100 francs of net income, direct taxation alone took from the population liable to the land-tax 53 francs —that is, more than half." [1]

"Towards the end of Louis xv.'s reign," says Turgot, "in Limousin, the king alone drew almost as much from the land as the landowner. There was a certain election, that of Tulle, from which he deducted for himself 56 per cent. of the produce."

In 1757 the taxes amounted to £283,156,000. In 1789 they amounted to £476,294,000.

And, owing to the deplorable social mechanism of which we have noticed the final results, the taxes had to be used periodically to resuscitate agriculture, which they had exhausted. That was done for the last time under Louis xvi., but with the usual poor results. It is interesting from our point of view to follow this strange operation; it enables us to grasp the march of events of which we ought to know the social causes.

Towards 1780 it was thought that there was going to be a revival of prosperity in the kingdom. The governors-general had received orders to give help to the labouring class. Some of them began to direct agriculture and industry, to repair the roads, which had become useless for commerce. They provided the peasants with seed, taught them the best methods of agricultural labour, ordered them to pull up the vines from places which they thought unsuitable either because of the soil or the climate, and to replace them by other crops. They took no end of trouble in other similar ways. They made beautiful roads, for which they made the peasants contribute forced labour, but promised that this time it should be paid at the same rate as free labour. They aimed, above all, at making a beautiful straight line of roadway, which cut through any land without the owners being expropriated except by the governor's decision, and without their being previously indemnified, with the result that it sometimes happened that they were not paid at all.

"But the very effort the Government was making to bring about public prosperity, the help, the encouragements it distributed, the public works it caused to be executed, increased

[1] P. 461.

the daily expenditure without proportionately increasing the receipts; and this daily threw the king into greater difficulties than those of his predecessors." [1]

So a system of increasing loans was added to the system of increasing taxation.

"And as there was no possible guarantee for the loans except taxation, which had been carried to its furthest limit, the king made the fatal mistake of allowing his creditors to suffer. He borrowed from all sides, privately and without competition, and his creditors were never sure of getting their interest; even their capital was always at the sole mercy of the prince and his sense of justice." [2]

The triumph of the public treasury over the private domain is complete. The result seems clear enough.

It will be interesting to consider in whose hands was the control of the treasury. On that side too it had developed strictly in accordance with its own law.

At the beginning, the States-general, which was composed of clergy, nobility, and burgesses, intervened in the management of the public treasury, at any rate in so far as it made complaints and gave advice. Subsequently, that care was left almost exclusively in the hands of the burgesses in those assemblies, and finally was almost limited to the official burgesses, as the merchants hardly figured there any longer. If one goes through the list of deputies of the Commons in the Assembly of 1614, the last assembly held before that of 1789, one finds scarcely anyone there but men of law and men connected with the treasury.

Once things had come to that point, it was much simpler for the official burgesses, who had their permanent order of rank, to make their observations and introduce their proposals with regard to the administration and to the management of finance at their periodical professional meetings. As the Parliament of Paris was the supreme court, to which everything in the kingdom was referred concerning questions of justice, it began, as was natural, to take the place of the States-general, which was greatly inferior inasmuch as it was only an intermittent institution and was only summoned at long and irregular intervals: as soon as it was dissolved, no importance was

[1] Tocqueville, *L'Ancien Régime et la Révolution*, p. 285. [2] *Ibid.*

attached to what it had resolved unless it was the king's good pleasure.

The most notable step taken by the Parliament in the direction I have just mentioned, was to intervene in regard to royal ordinances, which were communicated to it in order to be registered if it judged that they ought to become law. Before proceeding to the registration, Parliament drew up, if need were, certain considerations which were to be presented to the king, recommending the edict to be withdrawn or modified: these considerations were called "remonstrances." It tried to exercise this power by all sorts of lawful means, such as dilatory modes of procedure, and sometimes by unlawful methods, by peremptorily refusing to enregister the decree in spite of all the king's commands. Outside Parliament, revolts took place among the people, and even among the lords and princes. They were particularly noticeable the day after the dissolution of the States-general of 1614, and thirty years later during the Fronde.[1] But there is a great difference between these attempts and those of the feudal lords to check the royal omnipotence. Parliament had nothing to support it but its fine doctrines and its magisterial offices; it was entirely deprived of the means of execution which the Frankish domain had assured to the feudatories; and the princes or lords at court could not collect military forces except by appealing to popular sentiment or to foreigners, who might co-operate from considerations of self-interest. But such methods could not be relied on, as events soon showed. When the king had a clever man at his service, who was prompt to make the most of what resources his treasury supplied, he was still the better equipped of the two adversaries.

Richelieu was the man who presented himself for this service. We cannot praise his work unless we lay down as a principle that absolute monarchy is desirable: and that is the contrary of what is proved by the facts. We need not go into the question of Richelieu's genius or of Louis XIII.'s honesty, but we cannot overlook their colossal mistake when we know the evil which resulted from it in France. Their responsibility, however, is, in the judgment of history, very much lightened by the fact that the movement which they carried to its farthest limit was

[1] Augustin Thierry, *Histoire du Tiers État*, chap. viii.

more than three-quarters accomplished before their time. And there is a further motive why a great deal should be deducted from their responsibility: like all those who finish the work begun by predecessors, they reaped the honour, if honour it can be called, from many things which had been already accomplished.

"Richelieu," says Augustin Thierry, who is one of his eulogists, "before executing his political schemes, wished to submit them to the trial of a solemn debate, in order that they might be supported by a kind of national confirmation. He could not dream of submitting them to the States-general; he was a member of the Assembly of 1614, he had seen it at work, and moreover, his absolute genius was averse to those large assemblies; he sought the moral support he desired in an assembly of notables. In November 1626 he convoked fifty-five persons *of his own choice*: twelve representatives of the clergy, fourteen of the nobility, twenty-seven of the supreme courts, with a Treasurer of France and the Provost of the Merchants of Paris. Gaston, the king's brother, was president, and Marshals La Force and Bassompière were vice-presidents of the Assembly. But the nobles who took part in it, mainly state councillors, belonged to the Government rather than to the court; not a single duke or peer was there, nor a single provincial governor." [1]

Thus, after the States-general came the Parliament; after the Parliament, an occasional assembly of fifty-five notables, carefully selected: it was a process of gradual but steady diminution of control.

It is easy to see for what limited purpose the Assembly of Notables had been formed: it was merely wanted to give its approval of Richelieu's views, in order to hide their illegality and arbitrariness, and then it had to disappear immediately. The first sitting was held on December 2, 1626, in the great hall of the Tuileries, and before three months were over the assembly was dissolved, on February 24, 1627.

When it was gone, nothing remained but the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister then became the sole official to give counsel as to the management of the power, which by directing everything in France paralysed all initiative, even in the most fundamental affairs of life. The mass of the people achieved nothing:

[1] *Histoire du Tiers État*, p. 169.

before long there was only one active individuality in France, all the others were passive.

But the personage who was thus placed between the king and the country was also a superfluity and an anomaly in a system where everything depended on the will of the king: he was, as it were, a proxy who intervened between his principal and his business; he ran the risk of being a serious inconvenience to his employer.

There were only two Prime Ministers of that sort: Richelieu and Mazarin. The need for them soon came to an end.

The king declared, as everyone knows, that henceforth he would have no prime minister but himself. Louis XIV. merely summed up very neatly what was the result of shrewd observation when he said, "What is the State? I am it" ("*L'état, c'est moi*"). Thus the king represented everything in France, not only in the reality of facts, but actually in the official forms: he managed the finances entirely alone, as well as the matters to which the public money was supposed to be devoted—that is to say, as far as he possibly could.

How did he organise that management which had become more personal and at the same time more universal than ever?

For the actual work he turned his auxiliaries into subordinates of a kind, however capable they might be, like Colbert and Louvois. In the distant provinces he used the governors mercilessly to execute his wishes; they were his agents for doing everything, and were few in number and omnipotent in their own dominions. Like the Merovingian count, the governor was expected to conduct (that was the word) the courts of law, the police, the militia, and the finances. He had subalterns who were set over the different divisions of the district under his control, and who, under a variety of names, according to the part of the country where they worked, among others sub-delegates, performed the part of mere instruments. In the towns it very often happened that the governor made alterations in the staff, and even in the organisation of the local administration; he reformed the municipal constitution at will; it was almost as if he granted or repealed local charters according to the needs of his government.[1] In the rural districts there were two agents—the tax-gatherer and

[1] See Tocqueville, *L'Ancien Régime et la Révolution*, p. 379 among others.

the magistrate—both chosen from the inhabitants. The tax-gatherer was personally responsible for the incoming of the taxes; he had to divide among the inhabitants according to his own calculations the total amount of the taxes of the district, and to enforce the payment of them. There can be no doubt that the actions of a man intrusted with this office, who appeared to be acting merely as an inhabitant, must have been considered arbitrary, hateful, and baneful: arbitrary, because he burdened whom he liked with taxes; hateful, because he used violent means; baneful, because he was responsible to the sub-delegate and the governor for what was not paid. He represented the curials of the Roman imperial system of government. As for the magistrate, he performed the office of mayor—that is to say, of agent for the transmission of all the orders from the governor to the district. If the governor were not satisfied with their execution, he did not hesitate to imprison the magistrate without any legal proceedings.[1]

Now that we are acquainted with the public treasury through its executive staff, let us proceed to get some knowledge of its methods of employment.

What it aimed at was to win over to the support of the king, by means of the funds of the treasury, all the people whom it was diplomatic to win, all who might be of some value from that point of view. It is impossible to pension everyone; there is a shorter and less costly way—namely, to exempt people from paying money into the treasury: to work on a system of privileges or exemption from taxes. The exemptions go on increasing indefinitely: they serve as an excellent means of creating functionaries who have relatively little pay, through whom the Government may keep in touch with everything, and claim to provide for everything in detail. Posts are distributed on all sides, the salaries of which consist in the privilege of paying nothing. By this means everyone is eager to be an official, and hold office under the king, for the too obvious advantage of escaping the terrible taxes on one side at any-rate.

But we shall now see the sad result of this contrivance:

1. The privileged persons are multiplied to such an extent that everyone jostles them and takes their measure, asking

[1] See Tocqueville and Taine, *passim*.

what good right they have to be exempted from the very heavy burden that those beside them carry;

2. The weight of taxation is thrown more heavily upon the others, upon people who are in inferior positions and consequently have less opportunity and skill for making money.

That gives rise to the terrible ruin of the peasants and the small artisans which we have mentioned. It is the cause of the hatred with which these hard-worked people look upon those who are not exploited like themselves, and whom they consider, not without some reason, as the actual exploiters, because they do not hesitate to throw the whole weight of taxation upon them by continuing to get exemptions. It explains why the system of privileges became an abomination when it spread so enormously, and it is a phenomenon that belongs to the latter times of the great monarchy, not to the period and institutions of triumphant feudalism. It further explains why the popular dislike was directed against those whom the king did not oblige to pay taxes, rather than against the king himself, who seemed thus to treat them with honour and liberality.

The whole meaning of the revolt that has been called the Revolution lies therein.

And it is clear, too, how much the revolt was the natural outcome of the restoration of the ancient government of kings in France.

It must also be observed that it was as easy to accomplish the revolt as to conceive the idea of it. For, in that public community in which there was simply the king on the one side and private individuals on the other, no spontaneous resistance could be made to check the rising, since the bonds which might have directly united private men together, in however small a sphere, were broken. So the rebels had no difficulty in laying hands on the king's person and after that on anyone else they pleased. "What," exclaimed Burke, on watching the events of the Revolution shape themselves, "is there not a single man who can answer for the smallest district? Nay rather, there does not seem to be one man who can answer for another! Everyone is arrested in his own house without resistance whether he is a royalist, a

moderate, or anything else." [1] Even the army was as little united as the country and made as little spontaneous resistance. It had no common centre for action any more than had the people at large.[2] So it came about that when a well-marked opportunity arrived, when the convocation of the States-general took place just at the time when a famine was threatening, the dregs of the people revolted, and no one checked them, and the rebellion went through all the phases with which we are familiar and which are explained by all that we have just said.

If, however, the Revolution had been nothing but the rising of the people headed by the mob, when once their first passion had expended itself they would have come to some agreement, as is the case in hundreds of revolts of that kind. But when the people who were capable of making some kind of settlement followed the disorderly mob, the evil caused by the social organisation of France was revealed to its full extent. The French, from the foremost men to the last, from the men of genius to the mass of the people, were incapable of conceiving of society in any other way than as a communal society. They thought that the whole root of the evil was the mismanagement of the community: no one realised that management is impossible in a community of such proportions, which claims to deal with everything. And instead of despatching everyone to manage his own affairs in freedom, and associate himself with others as far as necessity truly demands it; instead of in consequence reducing the duties of the State to the direction of such things as are of public necessity and cannot be done by private persons, people continued to think that there could be no society except through the State, that society and the State were one and the same thing. And the worst of it was that this communal and essentially centralising organisation became an ideal conception, a rational doctrine, an absolute duty, instead of being the result of a simple evolution, a state of things created by regrettable circumstances. Then, the more reforms were needed, the more did people put faith in combination, and in the application of the communal system, and in the absolute mastership of the State. There was not a man of sense who did not wreck his best intentions on that

[1] See Tocqueville, p. 328. [2] See Taine, *Ancien Régime*, p. 511.

false rock, always imagining that a detestable machine would work best. And there was no fool who did not attempt to cry up his projects by showing that they were deduced from the idea of a general community, a universally accepted idea. All Rousseau's influence was founded on that idea, all the success of the *Contrat Social* depended on it. Consider in turn the constitutions which have exhausted France since 1789, consider the schemes of reform that have been advanced one after the other, they are all based on the same system—namely, that individuals go to make up society, and society must take charge of them.

The idea was applied in the most curious way in the revolutionary constitution. People attempted to decentralise the power, but did so on communistic lines. They made as many communities as there were municipalities. These municipalities were independent of each other, and each managed the affairs of all its own members. They were only connected together in so far as they had superior elective leaders, whose duty it was to point out what was necessary to be done, but who had no power to force them to put the measures they drew up in common into execution. That was the *Federation*. Now, in each municipality of this kind the private and public welfare was in the hands of a general assembly of the inhabitants; so each inhabitant had to be constantly on his feet in order to go and take his share in the management of the affairs of the commune and of each individual. There were so many meetings, so much voting, so many public functions to be attended, that everyone, taking it all round, spent what amounted to two days in the week over them. Would it not have been simpler, and produced infinitely better results in society, to let everyone devote those two days directly to his personal affairs, with the free help of those who could naturally help him the best? As a matter of fact, it turned out that only a very small number found it congenial to busy themselves about the welfare of everyone, and, needless to say, they were the least hard-working and the least capable. They formed the active part of the community and conducted affairs: they were the politicians.

Clubs and political parties were formed among these politicians between town and town, village and village, for the

purpose of using power in one direction or another all over the country; and of these parties the Jacobins were the most marked, because they were the warmest supporters of the doctrine of absolute communism, according to which the community was provided with unlimited power over everything in defiance of everything.

Since the Revolution, since the idea that the State should enter into every question regarding every individual has theoretically become the *ne plus ultra* of the social constitution for all countries and all time, France has continued to incline towards communism on principle, and has applied it to cases outside those which needed it; and she has done so, not as being compelled any longer by all-powerful masters, as was the case under the kings, but as being convinced that she is travelling towards a perfection, which she is sure to reach in due course, towards progress and a better future.

When errors of doctrine are added to errors of fact, it is impossible to travel anywhere but in a totally wrong direction with a fatally misguided energy.

That, then, was the way in which the Revolution carried on and strengthened the form of government which the French monarchy had used.

The series of Governments since 1789 have worked on better lines than the previous Government, but their notions have all been distorted by the fundamental communistic idea, so much so that the modern reforms all bear the marks of it.

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE LAST OF THE GREAT EUROPEAN MONARCHIES AND THE GREAT PARTICULARIST NATIONS OF THE PRESENT DAY: THE GERMAN EMPIRE, THE ENGLISH PEOPLE

IN speaking of the formation of Germany, we explained how the central region of Europe passed through the same social evolutions as France [1] a few centuries later.

In 1438, Albert II., Emperor of Germany, who by his marriage had united Hungary and Bohemia to the already considerable possessions of the house of Austria, considered himself powerful enough to establish the imperial title in his family. From that time forward there was nothing to prevent that supreme power, the idea of which had been borrowed from the communal system of antiquity, from still further increasing by the employment of force and a coherent policy. That event in Germany corresponded to what occurred in France in 1214, when Philip Augustus annexed to his own dominion of the Isle of France and Orléanais, Boulonnais, Artois, Amiénois, Vermandois, Valois, Normandy, Maine, Touraine, Anjou, and Poitou, and was the first of the Capetians to put an end to the custom of electing the successor to the throne.

The house of Austria, in spite of the efforts it made to absorb everything and bring unity to Germany, was not as successful as the Capetians in France. It found that these very Capetians were the main obstacle in its progress. The great French monarchy, which had attained to domination and unity at an earlier date, feared the rise of another state like herself, and did all in her power to oppose the work of absorption upon which the house of Austria had embarked.

[1] See above, Chap. XXII. p. 343.

Owing to her intervention, Germany remained broken up into a fairly large number of states, the heads of which were able to try their hand at a centralised monarchic government on the lines adopted by Spain, France, and Austria in turn. So it came about that instead of forming a single united kingdom, Germany was composed of a great Austrian monarchy and of a number of small monarchies which were likewise modelled on the urban and communal type.

We already know that the dominant and characteristic means of control employed by a society of that type are a treasury and military troops.

We shall find this fact confirmed in a striking manner by a rapid sketch of the growth of Prussia, which in the eighteenth century succeeded in forming a counterpoise to Austria of a more formidable kind than France had been, and which in the following century prevailed against both those powers at once, and created a new great monarchy, the German Empire of the present day.

The Prussian monarchy owed its formation to the Hohenzollerns still more than the French monarchy did to the Capetians. It began with the purchase of the March of Brandenburg, which corresponded in the north to the March of Austria in the south. It was part of the inheritance of the Emperor Sigismond, and was purchased by the Burgrave of Nuremburg, Frederick of Hohenzollern, for the sum of 400,000 ducats, of which the emperor was in need. This Frederick made such good use of his rights as Burgrave over Nuremburg, and of the resources of a few modest states he had in his possession, that he succeeded in making a large fortune, a phenomenon that was rare in those days.

As we explained previously with regard to the new Germanisation of Central Europe in the Middle Ages, the March of Brandenburg was a Wend—that is, a Slav country—with strong castles belonging to German knights of the regular old type, and with walled towns filled with artisans or German merchants. These two adventitious classes lived on the labour of the Slav population, whom they had not merely left but forcibly driven to work the land, which they did in the manner usual to communal families.

To the east of the March of Brandenburg there stretched

away to the far distance a country which was gradually formed by a combination of these same elements, in proportion as knights and merchants made their way into the Slav territory.

A country with that kind of social organisation was very suitable for the establishment of a power of the communal type.

It was all the more so because the knights who had made the most extensive conquests belonged to the military orders, the Teutonic Order, and the Order of the Lance-bearers, so that they were themselves members of a communistic organisation, and were more military and more used to administration than the knights who remained independent landowners.

When the Burgrave, Frederick of Hohenzollern, came to the state he had purchased, there were some signs of mutiny among the squires of the strongholds and the townsfolk of the walled cities. "They received him, it is said, with the famous jest: 'Were it to rain burgraves for a whole year, we should not allow them to grow in the March.' But the new elector's *money* and his *mercenaries*, and his Nuremburg jewels, as his canons were scoffingly called, ended by overcoming all local opposition." [1] This is another illustration of power based upon the possession of a treasury and military forces.

Therein lies the secret of the whole history of Prussia. We are sufficiently acquainted with the Prussia of Frederick the Great and of the Emperor William I. to know that it owed everything to a powerful military organisation, supported by a treasury that was managed with a care worthy of the best housewife. The voting for the "Septennat"—that is to say, for the war-tax for seven years—Prince Bismarck's last victory over modern Germany, is a further proof that the two fundamental agents of that great monarchy, as of all others, are the treasury and the army.

Prussia furnishes a no less striking confirmation of the fact we pointed out before, that there are very great similarities between the system of government of the great monarchies and that of the Revolution.

Frederick the Great was, as we know, an ardent disciple and champion of the so-called philosophic school which gave the best expression to the doctrinal error of the French Revolu-

[1] Himly, *Formation territoriale de l'Europe centrale*, vol. ii. pp. 11, 12.

tion. He found no difficulty in introducing the whole theory of the *Contrat Social* into a code which he himself drew up for Prussia, a kind of complete hand-book of legislation, embracing the principles of public power and the provisions of civil and penal law. Now this code is a perfect instrument of autocratic government. The explanation of it is very simple : the State is looked upon as being society, and the king is the expression of the State ; it follows that the king is the universal agent of society. So it is all the result of confounding society with the State, and the State with him who controls it. In the introduction to the code in question are the following words : " *The head of the State*, to whom is intrusted the duty of securing public welfare, which *is the sole aim* of society, *is authorised to direct and control all the actions of individuals towards this end.*" That is as worthy of Louis XIV. as of Jean-Jacques Rousseau. There is another statement in the same code, which, unless it is made with great reservations, seems to extol a terribly communistic method of solution for questions which are now absorbing Germany even more than before : " It *is incumbent upon the State* to see to the feeding, employment, and payment of all those who cannot (?) support themselves, and who have no claim to the help of *the lord* of the manor, or to the help of *the commune* : it is necessary to provide such persons with work which is suitable to their strength and their capacity." [1]

Alexis de Tocqueville makes a remark concerning this production of Frederick's which is an excellent confirmation of the resemblances we pointed out between the " Ancien Régime " and the Revolution : " The proof," he says, " that this code, which introduced so many apparent innovations (in the terminology and phraseology of the then new school of philosophers), in reality made very few innovations, and what makes it in consequence so interesting to anyone who is trying to get a better idea of the true state of society in that part of Germany at the end of the eighteenth century, is that the Prussian nation appeared scarcely to notice its publication."

We have now seen enough of the sad state into which those countries fell which the Franks had filled with their energy—that is to say, France and Germany—when the particu-

[1] Tocqueville, *L'Ancien Régime et la Révolution*, p. 366.

larist elements were swamped by the development of an extraordinary combination of subsisting communal elements.

It is time for us to look at the more cheerful spectacle presented by England, where the particularist form of society did not encounter the same condition of things.

We know from our previous studies that the fundamental reason of that difference was that, in the beginning, the Saxon emigrants in Great Britain were able to develop a rich soil in comfort without mingling with a communal population, which might have led to the formation of a Romano-barbarian system of government.

We have become so degenerate by our return to the ancient communal society that we have to make a mental effort in order to realise the vigorous action and pre-established harmony that are found in a nation in which the aim of every individual is to achieve an independence based on the power to form an estate, and to rely on the fewest possible personal bonds, even though they be voluntary ; but one can understand that a race that has made trial of these conditions for some generations and has thought and acted on these lines would not renounce that manner of life any more than it would renounce inventions of unquestioned utility, such as the wheel and the lever. So we found that the Saxons of England, from their collision with the Angles till their encounter with the Normans, did not abandon their isolated way of living, and kept their original constitution, which enabled them to go through every imaginable crisis.

We stopped at that point in their history where the Norman lords in England had decided to make the Saxon people their allies against the king, after having previously allied themselves with the king against the Saxon race and relied on their feudal cohesion.

There is nothing extraordinary in this change. William the Conqueror's expedition was not an agricultural colonisation but a military occupation, only it was better planned than that of the Danes, thanks to the excellent organisation of feudalism. It was therefore quite natural that the invaders should base their strength on their cohesion amongst themselves and on the cohesion between themselves and the king. But, as a matter of fact, there was no cohesion between them except

in so far as the king was their intermediary, just as there is none between the men of a company except through the captain. William had made each of the 60,000 vassals whom he set up in England directly dependent upon himself. He had not created any great feudatories with subordinate hierarchies of vassals who were not bound to the king except in so far as they were bound to his feudatories. His chosen comrades, whom he wished to reward more richly than the rest, had merely received grants of larger dues or rents to be gathered from the estates of the Saxons, and a higher title of honour: they were made counts instead of plain knights. Furthermore, the larger grants were not the proceeds of a number of contiguous estates, but of different domains, situated in different parts of the kingdom. And the title of count did not imply any administrative or military power even over the place from which he derived his title: it was merely a mark of honour. William made only two or three exceptions to this rule, but even in those cases he did not allow the power to be handed on, and no result of importance followed, because the king was careful not to give up any of his power. Even when a count received from an estate, apart from the rents, the benefit of a part of the profits derived from lawsuits, neither he nor his representatives had the right to judge cases.

All the administrative, military, and judicial functions were performed in the king's name by *sheriffs*, who were appointed to sections of the country called *shires* (probably the same thing as share, part, portion: these divisions are also called counties). It was an essential characteristic of the royal agent that he was liable to dismissal: he was often recalled and deprived of his office for very small offences, and always kept under a tight hand and watched narrowly. He also bore the title of viscount, but he had no connection with the count. It was a rule that no count should be made sheriff in the *shire* which gave him his title or where he held lands of any considerable extent.

It is therefore sufficiently clear that the Norman lords in England, in spite of their feudal titles of counts or knighted barons, had no political connection directly with the country or between themselves. They were only united through the king.

So it was not difficult for the king to dominate them, for

even if any of them showed an inclination to resist his will, the rebel had no following to support him, and was soon forced to give in: his property was taken and given to someone else, which meant that there was always "someone else" ready and willing to help the king on such an occasion.

Now it is extremely easy to see why the lords, with this entire absence of any direct organisation amongst themselves, felt that they were in a perilous position, uncertain of the issue of the struggle, when by a spontaneous movement they rose *en masse* against John and his successors, who attempted to tax the incomes of the lords to excess, and had favourites from Anjou and Poitou, who were quite ready to step into the places of the Normans when they had helped to evict them. It was then that the lords felt it necessary to rely upon the Saxon race, the power of whose combination and tenacity in action they had experienced on so many occasions. Their staff of officers was already furnished by the Saxons, which did away with the necessity of choosing officers among themselves,—and an endless task it would have been, because they would have had to begin at the very beginning, and their ranks would inevitably have been ruined and divided by rivalries. From that time forward the lords were hedged about, supported and swept onward by the natural organisation of the Saxon race. Once more the Saxons reassumed the direction of their own destinies. They were, so to speak, the current which carries away the boat, and makes it follow the stream in spite of the efforts at resistance made by the oarsmen.

When the Normans made advances of friendship towards the Saxons upon finding that the rupture between the English feudal system and the king made their position somewhat precarious, a number of lords decided that it would be better for them to quit their idle life of warfare, which was costly, and take to the active life of agriculture which the Saxons, their allies, led to such profit. They were all the more ready to welcome this solution of the difficulties of their new position because they were most of them petty lords, plain knights, who had only just so much property as was necessary to enable them to live in a simple manner and to keep a war-horse for their service, and who no longer found any great advantage in their feudal position. As a matter of fact, they were only

separated from the best Saxon peasants, the farmers on a large scale, by useless and troublesome distinctions. The Saxon had all the freedom and all the advantages on his side. In this way the two races rapidly became amalgamated, and formed that class of skilled farmers called the *Gentry*; or rather, it was in this way that a great part of the Norman population by a process of assimilation came to be transformed into the Saxon population.

The plain Norman knights were so much attracted by the way in which that rising and intelligent class of clever Saxon farmers had worked the rich soil of England, and by the way in which they planned their life, that even some time before the revolt from feudalism and the demand for the Great Charter these knights did all they could to escape from military service in their endeavour to live in the Saxon style. It was at this time that Henry II. (1154–89), who wished to avoid any action that might annoy "his farming knights"—note this curious appellation, "*nolens vexare agrarios milites*"—proposed to exempt them from military service on condition that they paid a tax of exoneration, and the terms were eagerly accepted. This tax received the name of *scutagium*, scutage-money. On the payment of that tax the knights were free to remain at home and cultivate their land.

But that tax did not do away with other feudal laws such as that by which, in the case of the minority of the heir, the property was put under the wardship or guardianship of the suzerain, usually the king, which too often was used as an opportunity for ruining the minor: or again, the right held by the suzerain or king of choosing a husband for the heiress when the fief fell to the female line, etc. So the knights found it far simpler to avoid knighthood altogether like honest Saxons; they did not trouble to gain admission into the orders of knighthood. The king protested when he found himself short of recruits. "Ordinances decreeing that the honour of knighthood was not to be avoided recur constantly in the course of the thirteenth century: they are manifest proof that it was only accepted with great unwillingness. The revival of the spirit of chivalry under Edward III. was no more than an accident and a passing fashion. As early as 1278 the king commanded the sheriffs to oblige, not only the persons belong-

ing to the class of knights, but all men whose income from ground-rents amounted to £20 sterling, no matter from what lord and under what title they held their lands, to be dubbed knights. That decree was afterwards repeated several times; it shows how much the two classes were confounded. In short, as early as the thirteenth century the greater number of the knights appear to have adopted the tastes and manners of the class of simple rural landowners." [1]

And so true was it that the Saxon type had brought about this transformation by the force of example, that even "as early as 1074, in the kind of manifesto issued by the barons against William I., the English, who cultivate their land in peace, drink and feast while their conquerors are obliged to make war on the Continent, are spoken of with a touch of envy." [2]

The military organisation in use at the end of the fourteenth century shows the evolution to be complete: the obligatory and gratuitous service which was imposed upon all landed knights had disappeared, and the tax which took its place had ceased to be gathered. No scutage was collected, according to Coke, after the eighth year of the reign of Edward II.—that is to say, after 1315. Here is a description of the class of simple Saxonised knights: "The kernel of the royal army—that is, the army which makes expeditions into foreign lands—is thus composed of restless and warlike barons who gather round them volunteers, men of a like spirit with themselves. They sell to the king the help of their regiments of adventurers for ready money. Most of the old knights keep more and more aloof from these bands of condottieri. Many of them, even, no longer bear the title of knights." They only take that of *squires*—that is to say, of people that are fit to become knights—or else that of *gentlemen*, which is the same thing: people of noble birth, fit to be made knights.[3]

And, as all those who worked an estate producing £20 sterling had been required through the sheriff, although with but little success, to obtain admission to an order of knighthood, every good farmer, whether of Saxon or Norman lineage, was certainly a member of the class of people fit to be made knights, and consequently bore the title of squire or gentle-

[1] Boutmy, *Le Développement de la Constitution en Angleterre*, pp. 81–83.
[2] Stubbs, i. 291.
[3] Boutmy, *ibid.* pp. 84–88.

man: that is the origin of those widespread and characteristic appellations among the English. Their history is significant.

The intelligent proprietors and farmers of estates belonging to that class were absorbed in their own affairs. They prospered and were very comfortable at home.

They were not eager to throw themselves into public life: quite the contrary, they had cast it aside when they broke away from feudal service. Although the sheriff used to summon them in accordance with Magna Carta to elect persons among themselves in each county, and subsequently in each market-town, to be their representatives in Parliament, they took very little trouble about it, knowing that the payment of taxes was almost the only topic to be discussed there. But, as a matter of fact, it was they who formed the really capable and influential class in the country, so much so that it became more and more impossible to do anything without them. Their help had to be obtained for almost every enterprise in each locality. Thus it soon happened that power came to seek them out in their very homes.

And, in the first place, a double blow fell upon the sheriff. His power rapidly sank to a very low ebb: everyone, it appears, abandoned the sheriff to chill isolation, had nothing to do with him, and no one was at all anxious for him to acquire any influence. Soon after, the sheriffs seem to have been chosen from among the class of which we have just been speaking, whereas formerly they came from among the most notable people.

So the general functions exercised by the sheriff in the king's name, and equivalent to those of the royal bailiffs in France, were deprived of their importance and were passed on to the gentry without the gentry having bestirred themselves in the matter.

Apart from the sheriffs, the kings had conceived the idea of sending capable judges on circuit from county to county, in order to administer justice more fairly everywhere and keep it still more directly under the king's control. But when the judges arrived in a county they found it extremely difficult to find out anything or to do anything without referring to these men of the class of gentry who knew the locality and took the lead in all the ordinary matters of life. "The judges seemed

to use the knights (or squires, or gentlemen) more and more as their auxiliaries. By degrees the assessment and collection of the taxes, the direction and arming of the national police, the duty of receiving the oath of peace, the local investigations of crimes and offences, the choice of the grand jury, the duty of serving among the limited number of jurymen who assisted in pronouncing judgment, all these things were intrusted to committees of these knights, which usually worked under the direction of the judges on circuit." Thus it came about that these same knights held a session four times a year; they gradually took all the local administration into their own hands: roads, bridges, prisons, the public administration of labour, the guardianship of the parishes, the relief of the poor.[1] In 1360 they were singly appointed as justices of the peace for the whole country: they were the predecessors of the famous *magistrates*.

"So all the owners of freeholds, the squires, gentlemen as well as knights, form part of the administration, and as one century succeeds another this active, hard-working class will, more and more, do by itself and unrewarded all the work of an immense bureaucracy." [2]

This accounts for the way in which *self-government* developed among the Saxon race after Norman feudalism had fallen into decay in England; it was accomplished by that solid class of people who lived on their estates after the manner of particularists, and in reality had everything in their hands long before their nominal and frequently changing masters were of necessity obliged to recognise their office and their rights.

Not long after, they reacquired military power likewise, but it must be observed that they transformed it. They formed, says a writer, a kind of home service, a kind of national guard which was no longer based on feudalism, the duties of which were purely civil and connected with matters of police. This militia could not be required to leave its county except when Parliament decided that the case in question was one of urgent necessity, nor to leave the kingdom under any circumstances whatsoever.[3]

[1] Boutmy, *Le Développement de la Constitution en Angleterre*, p. 104 ff.
[2] Boutmy, *ibid.* p. 107. [3] Griest, i. 209. See Boutmy, p. 86.

But the great business of these English people—and the earlier part of our history has brought it out sufficiently clearly—was to profit by the land: that object they pursued in a manner characteristic of the race. In spite of some marked instances of accidental complications, this has given to their history a unity and a fundamental simplicity which it is interesting to analyse. This will be the subject of our next chapter.

CHAPTER XXIX

THE GREAT PARTICULARIST NATIONS OF THE PRESENT DAY: THE ENGLISH PEOPLE—*Continued*

WE have read how the Saxon race in England, with its strong interest in the management of small estates, had succeeded in absorbing, in assimilating, the majority of the Norman feudal race, the knights, and had reassumed the government of the country.

I said that it was the great aim of that portion of the English people to maintain a land system consistent with its particularist character and likely to continue it. What is remarkable is the way in which, from the commencement of this epoch, when rapid and far-reaching transformations take place in economic development, the English have continued to invent practical means, shifts of all sorts, in order that the land, whatever the actual system of legislation in regard to land might be, might serve above all for the education of the race. That was the essential basis of their history from the beginning, although then it was less influenced by sudden turns of fortune and by great changes in labour; and their history still continues on the same lines.[1] Without making humanitarian or philosophic theories for the better distribution of the land among all, or for the definition of the rights of property, the Anglo-Saxons have from century to century stirred their practical intelligence to find a way by which the land can really be divided in a manner most advantageous for the vigorous exercise of their powers of personal initiative.

With this object in view, they secured the help of the legists, whom they were able to win to their side owing to their powerful

[1] *La Science Sociale*, November 1902, vol. xxxiv. p. 381; *L'Avenir de l'Empire Britannique*, by P. E. Lefébure.

position, which enabled them to dominate all the social forces of the country.

At first sight, nothing could appear more complicated, more confused than the land system in England, dating from the period we are studying. But in reality it all turns on this simple fact: a man who owns a piece of land, under any title whatsoever, disposes of it entirely as he thinks fit, with a view to its producing the largest possible profit; but if in his disposal of it he loses sight of the higher interests of the race, it will not be long before the pressure of opinion which makes itself felt in his surroundings—his family, his neighbourhood, and the whole country—leads by many ways, according to circumstances, to reform. Such and such lands, for instance, might be encumbered with entails with a special object; but then, because of the harm which they would seem likely to produce in the social development of the country, these entails would be set aside in a thousand ways. In fact, in spite of all the earlier arrangements for the free disposition of property, and counter even to all the legislative measures adopted by Parliament, which the middle class scarcely attended at all for a long time, the most persistent characteristic of the land system was the freedom private individuals were allowed to use in modifying it, by combining with each other to make every imaginable arrangement, by way of contract and testamentary disposition, and that freedom was always subordinate to the dominating idea: the maintenance of estates of a small or moderate size.

"The system under which large landed estates are held by the aristocracy at the present day in England," says Boutmy, "is not in any way a legacy from the Middle Ages: it is a creation of the last century. It is more than three hundred and fifty years since the freedom of bequest—that is to say, its extension to feudal property—became the rule, under a restriction that was destined to disappear in 1660 which set aside the right of primogeniture in cases of intestate succession. It is nearly five hundred years ago since the acuteness of lawyers invented a way of freeing the land by collusive methods of procedure, and actually obtained for the owners of estates (created under the feudal system) a very far-reaching power of disposition. England more than any other country was, even in the

feudal days, a country of freehold estates of small or moderate size. The present system of latifundia and of entails only came into force generally after the Restoration: it is not based on the law, but on a policy deliberately adopted by the upper classes."

"All the English lawyers," says the same writer, "the judges in common law, judges in equity, and practising members of the profession, in turn declare their opposition to these restrictions on the right of the disposal of property. Every century their fertile brains weave fictions of new interpretations, collusive methods of procedure, which nullify the prohibitions of the law. They have spent as much energy over this task as the French lawyers did over the aggrandisement of the royal power. The point to bear in mind as the outcome of this long story is, that with very few exceptions, under what profess to be most restrictive methods of land tenure, it has always been possible in England to divide land, to transfer it, to add it to the property of those who, adopting intelligent methods of farming, were anxious to extend the area of their estates, or convey it to wealthy merchants who were ambitious to get a footing in the counties." [1]

Owing to this pliancy of interpretation, and this fecundity of legal contrivance, it was easy for non-possessors of land to rise to the possession of it. To reach that position, neither then nor now was it necessary to become proprietor: land may be held under a great variety of titles, and these titles, according to Anglo-Saxon ideas, are all of equal value provided that they allow of one's using the land to one's own profit. There is no social distinction between a farmer and a proprietor; at least, the word "farmer" is used indifferently for a tenant holding the land on lease and a proprietor who farms his own estate. One can apply the phrase "gentleman farmer" to a gentleman who cultivates his own land and to a tenant, and in the latter case the fact that the farmer is a tenant does not prevent his being considered a "gentleman" if he is farming the land intelligently and in such a way as to improve it, with the dominant conviction on his own part that he is himself the finest product of his own labour, and that in himself he is perfecting the development of the race. From the point of view of the law, it is a matter of indifference if a man be a proprietor or a tenant,

[1] *Le Développement de la Constitution en Angleterre*, pp. 92–94.

provided that he has the financial qualifications, if he wishes to be elected to Parliament or serve as a magistrate or take his part in the vestry—that is to say, the parish or commune. This shows how easy it is to rise in the ranks of society and to the public position of a gentleman: one need not have capital or purchase an estate. It shows how far "the gentry" form an accessible class. They are being constantly recruited. They draw to their ranks everyone who has the personal qualities enabling him to rise. In that way they are closely connected with the class below: they are not, as a matter of fact, separated from it. That accounts for the marked influence they exercise over the whole nation.

It is easy to understand how it was that the lower classes in England did not early feel the need of resorting to urban trades for their means of living, since it was always open to them to better their position by the development of the land, aided as they were by the lawyers, who kept the road clear for them against the private and lawful dispositions of property which were opposed to their advance. They could better their position without leaving the country. Up to the middle of the eighteenth century England remained almost entirely rural. It is easy to estimate what must have been the independence and force of character of that homogeneous multitude of men who were firmly settled on the land and who were actuated by the desire to rest their claim of personal dignity upon its possession. The greater number of the towns were as yet merely country towns. The employments and customs of the inhabitants of the towns were the same as those of the rest of the population of the county. The *large* towns were comparatively few, and their population increased very slowly from four to six thousand inhabitants, in the first half of the eighteenth century. They depended, almost all of them, directly on the king; it was from him that they held their charters, and thus there was no room for misunderstandings arising between them and the barons or knights in their vicinity. With regard to the *ordinary* towns, they were brought under the control of the authorities of the county—that is to say, of the country districts—in accordance with the general administrative regulations. By 1360 the magistrates appointed for the whole county had received the jurisdic-

tion over all the urban centres which were not specially exempted.[1]

Whilst those we have just mentioned were attracted and grouped round the *gentry*, the unsuccessful members of the families of the high nobility, who as a whole could not retain their place in the process of social evolution, were also absorbed by it. These families had retained the bad traditions of knighthood. We have seen that the leaders of the mercenary armies were recruited from their ranks. They contended with one another for court favour. They took the lead in popular movements in order to make what profit they could from them. It was they who had organised Parliament, and they were summoned to it by name. This summons by name was the only clear distinction that existed between their rank and that of the plain knights; and as that summons was quite naturally made only to one of the members of the family, to the head of it, it came about that the peers were considered to belong to a special rank which belonged to them personally and did not extend to the other members of the family. Such was the origin of the House of Peers in Parliament.

In the circumstances I have just indicated these great families encountered a thousand chances of failure. So they drew nearer to the gentry, and were glad to take refuge among them by adopting the Saxon mode of life and by farming an estate of moderate size as proprietors or tenants. Their baronies they divided up, unless they had already been deprived of them.

The Wars of the Roses exterminated what remained of that high nobility of Norman lineage, or of the recruits it had been able to make. It was simply a war of succession between the house of the Dukes of Lancaster and that of the Dukes of York, who disputed for the throne of England, a red rose being the emblem of the former, a white rose of the latter. After both parties were exhausted by the struggle, the quarrel was ended by the accession of Henry VII. of the house of Tudor, of the red rose, who, by marrying Elizabeth, daughter of Edward IV. of the white rose, united in his person the claims of the rival houses.

During the war the high nobility were divided between

[1] See Boutmy, pp. 96-99, 305-306.

the two factions. "Their motives were hardly disguised. No serious thought of the rights or legitimacy of their leader, no sincere attachment to his person, made the two divisions of the nobility take sides against one another, but self-interest in its most brutal form, an insatiable desire for booty, and a spirit of hatred which required and sought a vent for its fierceness. During the long period extending from Richard II. to Henry VII. (1377–1485) they played the cruel game of war and chance. They plotted, they betrayed each other, they massacred one another on the field of battle, and the day after beheaded those whom the fortune of war had spared. The House of Lords was only a place of temporary power for the faction which had succeeded in proscribing its opponents; and beside it a king *de facto*, consecrated perhaps by a 'révolution d'hôtel de ville,' pleaded, by way of form, a right in which no one any longer believed."

"After Henry VII. had stifled the last movements of the rebellion, and caused the barons who were still suspected of leading armed bands to be punished by the Star Chamber, the number of the barons was very greatly reduced. The king summoned no more than twenty-nine lay peers to his first parliament. The old Norman and feudal nobility—of high degree—no longer existed; its great estates had been divided or confiscated by the treasury." [1]

What was to be the future of the gentry now became clear. "Over against these unstable factions—who fought together in the Wars of the Roses—stood the Chamber of the Commons, the sole authority that was permanent and broadly national. It, by force of circumstances, assumed the character of a kind of arbitrator. Of no other body could those who had claims on property arising out of political action and open to dispute ask an uncertain recognition." [2]

We know how powerful were the gentry in the country when they lived on their estates, and how little pleasure they took in going to Parliament, which they knew was not the true source of their power. So it was then for the first time that the House of Commons "still timid, uncertain, astonished at the position it was gaining, exercised the preponderance of authority—and that for more than a century. Its archives

[1] Boutmy, pp. 125, 126, 129. [2] *Ibid.* p. 126.

were filled with precedents, large and liberal customs dominated its Orders, its records were rendered illustrious by its claims. The right of fixing the exact limits of a law instead of merely indicating the subject for legislation by complaints and prayers, the privilege of voting taxes of all kinds, that of controlling the use of public money, the initiative of the Commons with regard to taxes, the control over the nomination of state officers —in a word, the whole immense prerogative, to belong in the future to the lower House, asserted itself. Already it was partly settled, and in so far as it could not yet be settled, the lines of its development were indicated and noteworthy precedents were being created to prepare the way for its expansion." [1]

But that is not all. When the Wars of the Roses came to an end, the high nobility, the peerage, the House of Lords, as I said, was decimated, or rather, nearly annihilated. Its vacant places had to be filled by a new class. Henry VII. chose almost all the new peers from the ranks of the gentry. From where else could he have chosen them ?

Thus the gentry spread everywhere by the natural development of things because they had remained firmly attached to their independence by continuing to work their modest rural domains. By remaining firm on this one point they had ended by controlling all. The original Anglo-Saxon constitution, in spite of all the diverse changes of fortune it had experienced, completely prevailed over the Norman institutions by the very simple and invariable method we have noted. It first mastered them, then absorbed them. It remains to be seen how, even while it retained their form, it altered the nature of those institutions, changed their spirit, and modified the effect they produced upon society. That was what happened when the high nobility was reformed by the introduction of the men of the gentry.

But the main point of difference between the new nobility and the old was that, in accordance with its antecedents, the new nobility was not in any way military. Those who rose to that rank remained plain civilians. That was the end of what chivalry still remained in the high nobility in England. All classes in the country, then, were brought back to an ordinary kind of life. These peers of the second period must

[1] Boutmy, p. 127.

be conceived as very much the same as those created by Louis Philip in France. But the English nobles, owing to their large grants of land, were richer and lived more sumptuously.

The disappearance of the old Norman nobility was a gain. It was also a good thing that the new nobility took its place without assuming its characteristics.

But in so far as the elevation of a part of the gentry was somewhat unexpected, and was an artificial proceeding, it involved some drawbacks. In its natural and spontaneous development, the middle class had not yet reached the point of being able to fulfil with success the part which had somewhat precipitately devolved upon it. We ought to observe what were the duties it had constantly performed since the beginning of Anglo-Saxon history. It encouraged and supported those men who, either owing to some position they had obtained, or because of their tastes and abilities, devoted themselves to the management of public affairs, or, on the contrary, it kept them back according as they governed to its liking or not. It encouraged or checked by its authority as much as by its good sense, thanks to its own secure position. And so, through this double power of urging and staying, it guided the course of events. But for initiating, organising, and administering public affairs men were needed who were accustomed to handle more difficult questions than those connected with the management of an estate of moderate importance, however painstaking and venturesome it might be. For that reason the Saxon people in the early days, as we saw, turned to account the services of leaders of special ability, such as Cerdic, Alfred the Great, Egbert the Great. When these leaders, men of exceptional endowments, whom I should rather call agents holding a high position, happened to make mistakes, as was the case in the Danish invasion and Norman invasion, the Saxon people quietly retired to their estates and there defended themselves as best they could till a better opportunity occurred. We saw, for example, how they reassumed their public action against the Norman kings when they found leaders among the Norman barons themselves, and supported them in the demand for the Great Charter.

Certainly the members of the gentry who were placed by the Tudors in possession of great properties, of titles, of the

offices belonging to the high nobility, took advantage of the opportunity to develop their abilities and adapt themselves speedily to affairs of importance. But it must be well understood that the Tudors took care to choose them in such a way that these new nobles, these favourites, did not use their capacities and their resources to aid the gentry against the king. That is why the Tudors were surrounded by such perfect courtiers. They turned this readiness to yield to the caprice of royalty to account as far as possible, and this is what gave to their reign an appearance of omnipotence and to the nobility of that time the character of servility.

But, to tell the truth, that happened in regard to these creatures of the king which usually happens with people of that kind: they really only sought to serve their own interests. They made the most of their position for their own advance without devoting themselves to the king any more than to the gentry. They made all sorts of scandalous profits, the result of which was that the less clever among them or the less fortunate fell into disgrace, and were replaced by others of the same stamp.

One can understand that a nobility of that kind, even if it was not an actual hindrance to royalty, could not, after all, have been of much advantage. Known to have been actuated by mercenary motives it could not but involve discredit. It was no source of strength to the king but rather of weakness, as was soon to become evident.

As for the gentry who remained gentry, they proceeded to make their way up by their own natural and automatic development. They were constantly undergoing a process of selection. The most capable gradually increased the importance of their estates.

They did that in six ways mainly:

1. By buying up in turn the small estates of the less capable farmers;

2. By selecting from among the dispossessed those who seemed likely to take advantage of a good opportunity, and by making them tenant-farmers over a part of the newly acquired land under vigorous supervision;

3. By adopting the methods of high farming over the rest of the estate thus enlarged;

4. By devoting their attention to the industrial products of agriculture—that is to say, those products which commerce could turn to the best account;

5. By leasing or buying common land in order to put it under cultivation;

6. By establishing industries on their estates, such as the weaving of wool, lime-kilns, distilleries, etc.

Thus there comes before us a new type of cultivator who is ready to adopt more hazardous operations and tends to make use of more powerful agents of production, who leaves the swaddling clothes of the estate of moderate size and creates the domain that is great, not only in extent, but in the technical methods it applies.

That is the preparation and formation of the true Saxon aristocracy.

The earlier advancement of part of the gentry which we have just noted, was not useless to the rest: the way had been opened for them; it was recognised that there was only a difference of degree between the gentry and the nobility, properly so called. Those who formed the nobility under the Tudors were simple gentlemen on the eve of their elevation: the then gentlemen felt that it was not very difficult for them at some time to rise by their own ability to the rank and position of that nobility which was purely a royal creation.

When the élite of the gentry by force of energy began to assume a status superior to that of proprietorship of a moderate estate, they insensibly eliminated from the country districts the lower part of the population whose small estates and communal rights they had acquired.

Then only did England cease to be as absolutely rural as we called it a few pages since. Till then the continuous process of clearing all available land for cultivation had afforded sufficient scope for countrymen. Moreover, people could live close together without being cramped for space, under the system of small farming, the only system suitable for people of small means; for, as the result of wars and invasions, the land had been burdened to an extraordinary extent by war-taxes, danegeld, Norman feudal dues, etc. Money had been expended in large quantities on the wars of the upper classes, who were in the habit of keeping the greater part

of the land under rental. Very little of it returned to the land.

The wars, too, had a further result. Periodically they reduced the population, while at the same time they offered it new openings for employment elsewhere.

In the wars in Normandy and Guyenne, and in the Hundred Years' War, an immense number of men, known in history as English Archers, left the country. Thus, both at the conclusion of successful military expeditions and at times of peace there was a widespread emigration on the part of people who settled here and there in France, Germany, and above all in Flanders.

The people had so far been able to satisfy the need of expansion by crowding on to small farms, and by emigrating in detached groups after the Continental wars.

As a result of the Hundred Years' War came the development, or rather the commencement, of navigation. The Saxons—I have often insisted upon this point, which appears incredible in the face of the maritime power of England at the present day—the Saxons did not take to navigation so long as agriculture was open to them. The necessity of transporting troops to the Continent, and of keeping England in touch with France for a whole century, impelled the kings of England to create a fleet of merchantmen which they could utilise as transports.

To effect this object they adopted an arbitrary and factitious method.

Till the end of the fifteenth century the Hanse towns performed the part of carriers by sea for England: one of their great privileged ports was London, as we have said. Their principal business was to import from England to Flanders English wools, renowned for their fine quality, and to export them to England when they had been made up by Flemish weavers. The English kings withdrew their custom from the Hanse towns, and did not allow wool to go out of the country or cloth to come into it except in English ships. As a result of this policy, England came to have a fleet. No sooner was seamanship a profession than Saxon energy developed it, and thus gave new scope to fishing.

Such was the new opening offered to English emigration, whilst the gentry devoted themselves to high farming.

They were able to devote themselves to it, for the reasons we have mentioned, when times of peace as well as ready money came to further agriculture, since the great wars had come to an end with the advancement of the essentially unmilitary nobility of the Tudors.

But the termination of the wars and the development of high farming, two facts naturally connected, hindered the expansion of the race in two ways. The opening provided by expeditions abroad was closed, or at least singularly diminished; the opening provided by small farming gradually diminished as the large estates extended.

Then industry provided a new opening for England. That was in the sixteenth century. We saw, in fact, that those among the gentry who created large estates introduced industries as a means of developing them.

But though England then began to be less exclusively agricultural, she did not therefore cease to be rural. Industry was started and developed in the country districts.

Its development was hastened by an immense immigration of Flemish at the time when Spain began to oppress the low countries—that is to say, in the second half of the sixteenth century.

Owing to the way in which agriculture and manufacture prospered in the hands of the élite of the gentry, maritime commerce increased.

Under the Tudors, then, in the course of the sixteenth century, we find a group of gentry which owes its growth to its own energy and to the technical development of its country estates. This time the Saxon race was to have leaders who really sprang from its own peculiar form of society.

It was then that England entered upon the extraordinary movement of expansion which, as we have seen, it originated so late in its history. It could not have started sooner; the Saxons had to have Saxon leaders; the gentry had to have landowners of great estates formed in the Saxon manner for their governing nobility.

We can understand from this why the Tudor period has such a glamour in the eyes of the English. It is at this epoch that the English emerged entirely from the Norman system, and that the gentry stepped into the places of the nobility.

It was then also that the gentry learned how to direct public affairs independently of the nobility, even the new nobility, as we shall soon see. In a word, it was at this period that the English found again the racial characteristics of the pure Saxon, and the Saxon type acquired a capacity for great affairs, which it had not shown till then.

It is none the less true that during this period the English people was, on the whole, without any leaders who were worthy of it. It was left neglected between the nobility created by the Tudors and the élite of the gentry who were in the process of development, but that process was not yet complete, and they were not yet in the ascendant.

As is generally the way with the English people in similar situations, they submitted with the best grace to what they were as yet unable to prevent, and awaited the future. The Tudors took advantage of this situation, and indulged in a thousand royal caprices: so far as it lay in their power, they were despots.

But the English, who pay very little attention to the causes of their superiority, did not trouble themselves to distinguish what they did in the Tudor period, and what wrongs the Tudors committed against them. All that they have retained from that time is the impression of a period of great national development, and they confound the movement which took place in the nation at that time with the personal history of the reigning princes. It is all the easier to slip into this confusion, because there is always a kind of brilliancy which embellishes the reigns of princes who pose as autocrats with a certain amount of bluster, and are surrounded by a flattering and brilliant court.

So much for our brief but clear outline of the reign of the Tudors.

The events with which that epoch closed will throw still further light on it.

CHAPTER XXX

THE GREAT PARTICULARIST NATIONS OF THE PRESENT DAY: THE FOUNDATION OF THE UNITED STATES

WHEN the Stuarts were called to succeed the Tudors, who were left without direct descendants after Elizabeth, they carried on the system of government of the Tudors. They liked forcible methods and autocracy.

But the élite of the gentry had nearly completed their development. Under their influence the House of Commons, of which they were members, became a body of men who felt that they had the power to take into their hands the detailed control of public affairs independently of the king and the lords, who governed badly, as we know.

That was the whole meaning of the English Revolution of 1648: it represented the collision of the new leaders of the English people, the élite of the gentry in the House of Commons, with the former leaders of the nation, the reigning princes and the lords they had created, who had ceased to be equal to their task.

The struggle ended as it was inevitable it should end: by the defeat of the king and the House of Lords.

The élite of the gentry were to be put to the test; they were neither drilled nor disciplined; their numbers increased at different points in the country without combination and without any common understanding; to a certain extent they were still a tumultuary force. The result was that while it was unanimous in opposing the king and the House of Lords, the House of Commons was divided into parties, and between these there was for a time a new cleavage, due to cleverness and force, to the ability of Cromwell and his Ironsides.

But in spite of craft and grip, Cromwell and his Ironsides would not have had a long history had not Cromwell, by dis-

solving the House of Commons and making himself sole governor, under the title of "Protector of the Commonwealth of England, Scotland, and Ireland," begun to govern as a "gentleman" according to the ideas of his class, to the satisfaction of the English people, and as the élite of the gentry might have done had they concerted measures to better effect. We know that the English do not pick quarrels with their leaders except when they govern them in a manner which they consider unsatisfactory. It is a fact which constantly recurs in their history. Cromwell was all the better able to govern in that way, because he was a gentleman of some repute in the county of Huntingdon.

The success of Cromwell's government is a proof in the highest degree of the capacity for government acquired by the superior members of the gentry.

I need not remind the reader how Cromwell's son and successor did not long carry on a task to which only the personal ability of his father was proportioned. He abdicated in 1659.

The élite of the gentry, who continued to develop their estates and carry on their lucrative enterprises, then came forward in a body and displayed a growing power. From that time they were really on the same footing with the nobility properly so called, the lords; they worked their way up by their ability, and recruited the lords, and took their places one after the other. It was a common thing to see the father sitting in the House of Lords, while the son, even the eldest, and the heir-presumptive to the title, sat in the House of Commons. So, both the House of Lords and the House of Commons were largely composed of and vigorously led by the élite of the rural gentry.

They made and unmade dynasties: that of the new Stuarts, the house of Orange, the house of Hanover. In fact, they alone held the reins of government as they do to-day.

At this epoch England, Saxon England, was eminently aristocratic and her aristocracy eminently rural. But the estate which had become so extensive in the hands of the élite of the gentry came near overwhelming the estate of moderate size and checked the upward movement of the rest of the gentry, who were always striving to rise in the social scale.

The formation of a large number of great domains of the

Saxon type laid obstacles in the way of two things: (1) the creation of estates of a small and moderate size; (2) the emancipation of budding industry from the legislative domination of the owners of the great estates.

In other words, it became difficult for the inferior gentry to rise in the social scale, either through the estate or through industry. Both estates and industry, which was still rural, were closely guarded by the élite of the gentry, who were always on the watch in Parliament, in the House of Lords and in the House of Commons, to adopt measures that were favourable to the maintenance of large estates.

If this selfish and backward movement of the élite of the gentry against the gentry who were seeking to rise in society had ever succeeded, England's career would have ended there, owing to the degeneration which naturally attacks any superior body of people as soon as it ceases to receive new recruits.

But the gentry did not give way to their élite any more than they did to any of the leaders whom, however, they had found to be necessary in the course of their history.

They triumphed first on the question of the domain, and then on that of industry.

But in accordance with the law of facts which we have so often observed in the particularist form of society, they had to win their way first on the question of the domain, and afterwards on the question of industry: the point from which they work is always the estate.

Let us then consider in turn the question of the domain and that of industry.

1. The question of the domain.

Those who wanted to make new estates found a way out of the difficulty by going to the English possessions across the sea and founding estates there.

The first of the Tudors, Henry VII., who lived at the time of the great Portuguese and Spanish discoveries, followed the general current of thought: he wished to have his share of the discoveries and the colonies. He had accepted the proposals made by Christopher Columbus, who, after he had been repudiated by the King of Portugal and also by the King of Spain, was still on the lookout for someone who would risk a boat in the discovery of the western passage to India. But the

Queen of Spain at last paid down the money for the enterprise, and Christopher Columbus remained Spain's protégé. Henry VII. did not consider himself beaten after Columbus' success was published: he enlisted in his service a Venetian, John Cabot, who discovered Newfoundland for him in 1497.

That led the way to a series of discoveries made in England's name on the American coast, south of Newfoundland, between the Atlantic and the Alleghany Mountains.

But for some time the newly acquired land was of little use to the English. The few ill-equipped people, who were at first adventuresome enough to find their way there, succumbed.

All the pressure of circumstances such as I have just described in the history of the gentry, was necessary to render those lands productive and far-famed.

The great emigration, whose connection with what I have just said I will proceed to show, began almost at the commencement of the seventeenth century, a little before the Revolution of 1648, just at the time when the élite of the gentry were on the point of reaching the height of their power.

We remarked that just when they had reached that position, they split up into different parties, in the midst of which Cromwell rose to fame.

Some of these parties, or at least a certain number of their more resolute members, determined to become entirely independent by migrating to a new country, where they would admit no dissentients.

Their exclusiveness is significant; it reminds us of what the English did when they took possession of the soil of Great Britain in the fifth and sixth centuries: they wanted unoccupied land, and they did not wish to lose their individuality or to disappear in the midst of a society which was not formed according to their needs.

They ceased, then, to emigrate one by one and lose themselves among the European races, but acted their historic settlement of Great Britain over again in a country of a similar type across the Atlantic.

Each great group that landed in America made its own distinct constitution, just as each Saxon invasion did in past times.

They were all agricultural emigrants.

They went under the direction of a lord, or one of the élite of the gentry.

They founded isolated estates.

They appointed an assembly, analogous to the Witenagemot, to discuss public matters with the governor—that is to say, with the lord or gentleman who had organised the party, or else with the representative of the company or of the sovereign, who sometimes played the same part as the lords and gentlemen in founding colonies or buying them from the founders.

Within a short time everything was prosperous, and the land between the Atlantic and the Alleghanies was soon populated, just as was the south of England by the arrival of the Saxons.

But the owners of large estates in England, who entrenched themselves, as we saw, in their position, and defended themselves with the authority of Parliament, were disquieted by this new development of the gentry in the Colonies. They tried to parry the blow with which it before long threatened them by making use of the resources which they had realised in the course of their upward movement. To this end they adopted the colonial system of the Continental races, who made a point of developing the Colonies for the advantage of the metropolis by working them in such a way as to bring profit to the "mother country."

Accordingly, the English Parliament decreed that the inhabitants of the Colonies should be bound to send all their produce to England and to buy all their merchandise from no markets but the English markets. Pitt, the then Prime Minister, who, however, called himself a friend of the Americans, declared in the House of Commons that America had no right to manufacture even a nail for a horseshoe.

"The exportation of hats from one colony to another was prohibited, and a hat-maker could not have more than two apprentices at a time; for if the Colonies are left to do as they like, said the defenders of these vexatious laws, they will supply the whole world with hats." A characteristic declaration! [1]

Not only were the colonists very considerably annoyed by these measures, "but they soon perceived that if England's claim to tax her Colonies for her own profit, and according as it

[1] *Hist. des États Unis*, par Nolte, vol. i. p. 220.

suited her pleasure, were once recognised, a system of oppression might be introduced, which would gradually become intolerable, and which it would no longer be possible to abolish later on. Since they were not represented in the English Parliament, what was there to prevent the House from continuing to lighten the taxes in England at the expense of the Americans? And what attention would that assembly pay to the consideration of taxes from which its members would be exempted?" [1]

"Such were the considerations which led the American colonists to deny that the English Parliament had the right to levy any taxes upon the Colonies, declaring that all attempts to levy them would violate their privileges in two ways; for, they had been granted by royal charters the right as colonists to tax themselves for their own needs, and as British subjects they ought not to pay any taxes save those imposed by their representatives: but they were not represented in the English Parliament." [2]

We shall now discover what an important point it was for the Anglo-Saxon race that they had taken possession of an unoccupied land, or of land that had become uninhabited.

How could those young Colonies, which were still engaged in clearing the ground for cultivation and which obtained almost all their manufactured goods from England, have been able to find any means of resisting England, powerful as she then was, had not the whole of their population had the same particularist form of society, the same ideas concerning the conditions of existence, and the same estimate of the consequence that would follow if the claims of the metropolis were realised? Suppose that these English colonists had been planted here and there in the midst of a population of another type, such as the Mexicans or Peruvians; suppose that the whole of that population had been taxed by England, and ask yourself what the Americans of English origin could have done to oppose that tax if they had been swallowed up in the midst of the surrounding native tribes, who had been accustomed for centuries to carry the greater part of their harvest to the public storehouses.

The strength of the Saxon, in his voluntary isolation on his estate, lies in the fact that all the people he has at his side are

[1] *Hist. des États Unis*, p. 222. [2] *Ibid.* pp. 222–223.

of the same stamp as himself, and that consequently they have a common sympathy with him which makes them ready to combine in action when such action would be beneficial.

That is why the colonists were unanimous in their opinion of the gravity of England's claims, which is all the more remarkable because, in the given circumstances, the colonists were aware that they were rich enough to satisfy England's demands. So their resistance was not prompted by the bitter indignation of people in actual want, but by the reflection that their social organisation, their self-government was being threatened. Upon so subtle and yet so decisive a point no population except a purely Saxon one could have a spontaneous understanding. Without that understanding the cause would have been completely lost, and English America would have become like the colonies of other European races.

A further point is very clearly brought out at this juncture: The unanimity of the Saxons with regard to their independence would have been useless had they not possessed the triple instrument necessary for the execution of their purposes—namely, bodily strength, personal initiative, and the resources furnished by the estate. That threefold instrument was set going, and how great was its power of work is shown by the American colonists in their triumphant struggle against England.

Without bodily strength they would never have been able to carry on a war in which they were ill provided with arms and with appliances of every kind; and yet it was these "peasants," as the English called them, who defeated the troops England had enlisted from among her lower classes or from Germany.

Without personal initiative they could not have made up for the lack of previous organisation and acquired discipline.

Without the resources of the estate they would have been unable to borrow money as they did, on the security of all the property of the colony, as Franklin persuaded them to do.

Now it must be clearly recognised that the threefold instrument to which the Saxons owe the maintenance of their liberty —namely, bodily strength, individual initiative, the resources of the private estate—was the outcome of *their aim in life, which was to create for themselves independent estates.*

Therein lies the basis of American independence.

We again find ourselves face to face with the same problem as in England. This people was certainly excellently constituted for resistance ; it is none the less true that in a huge undertaking such as that of a war against a great power, it needed leaders who were well versed in great affairs.

It was not only a question of conducting a great war, but it was necessary above all to unite in one bond the various English Colonies in America which were absolutely independent of one another, and were each directly connected with the metropolis, and had practically no dealings with each other. We observed that they were purposely founded independently, in order that each colony should include only persons of similar opinions ; at that time they were divided into separate religious groups : the Puritans, under Sir William Penn in Pennsylvania ; the Universal Tolerants, the followers of Roger William in Rhode Island ; the Catholic Tolerants, under Lord Baltimore in Maryland, etc.

The problem was solved in exactly the same way as in England : the large estate, with its advanced methods of agriculture, produced leaders who were equal to the vast tasks before them.

There was one colony in which, contrary to the general rule, the large estate had developed over-rapidly under the influence of the Saxons—namely, Virginia. Virginia was not only the oldest of the Colonies, as it dated from 1607, and had a start over the others ; it not only had a perceptibly warm climate, which caused the harvests to be very abundant ; but it had introduced the practice of buying negroes, which had enabled the colonists to pass rapidly from small farming and farming on a moderate scale to farming on a vast scale. So the Virginians took the lead in the movement towards American independence. They were in the position of the nobility in relation to the colonial gentry.

The Assembly of Virginia, a kind of Witenagemot which, as we observed, existed in each colony, was the first to oppose the system of English taxation in America : in May 1765 it passed a motion that no power but Virginia should tax Virginia.

The other colonies followed the example : " As soon as they heard of the resolution, they hastened to follow Virginia's

example. In the province of Massachussets James Otis proposed that an American Congress should be convened, which should meet without the authorisation of the English Government. All the colonial assemblies were invited to send delegates to New York on the first Monday in October 1765 . . . nine out of thirteen colonies sent representatives. . . ." [1]

That was only the beginning of the movement; but ten years later the same thing recurred. "Seeing that the colony of Virginia was in some sort leader of the others, it was decided that the first declaration of *Independence*—that is to say, of total separation from England—should be made by that colony. At the meeting of the *Continental Congress* of the 8th of June 1776, Henry Lee, the Virginian deputy, after a stirring speech submitted the following resolutions to the assembly:

"That the united colonies are, and should be by rights, free and independent states; that they are freed from all loyalty to the Government of Great Britain; and that all political relations between them and the State of Great Britain are and must be entirely broken off;

"That it is imperative to adopt efficacious measures immediately for contracting foreign alliances;

"That a scheme for a confederation be prepared and despatched to the various colonies, that they may study it and give it their approbation." [2]

Here we see in strong relief the new and superior element in the mechanism which created the United States, and it has often played its part in the history of the Saxon race: men well fitted for administration on a large scale.

After this concise classification of the elements at work, let us show by a few detailed examples how far the facts correspond to it.

Immediately after the first Congress of New York in 1765, mentioned above, "a general league was spontaneously organised in North America with the object of putting a stop to the use of all English merchandise (of that merchandise which it had been attempted to thrust upon the Colonies). A *Society for the Promotion of Art and Commerce* was founded at New York, and markets were opened for the sale of articles of American manufacture (for industry was beginning to take

[1] *Hist. des États Unis*, p. 230. [2] *Ibid.* p. 305.

root there): the cloth, woollen goods, and paper hangings that were brought there sold easily; and as it was feared that the woollen factories would run short of raw material, it was decided that no more sheep should be eaten. Men and women pledged themselves to wear nothing but clothes made of cloth manufactured by Americans. At Newport, at Boston, families accustomed to drink tea made infusions of dried raspberry-leaves. The women were eminently vigorous promoters of the league against the commerce of the mother country. They displayed an incredible energy and activity in the fabrication of their garments. In the family of a man of note, James Dixon (at Newport, Rhode Island), 487 yards of cloth were woven and 36 pairs of stockings knitted in the space of eighteen months." [1]

Similar efforts were made later on to procure means for military defence; that was ten years later, in 1775, when the Declaration of Independence was made. Here is a description of the beginning of hostilities:

"The English troops continued to arrive at Boston, and General Gage set spies upon the patriots (the Americans) with the object of discovering where they were hiding their military stores. The inhabitants on their side kept their eye upon him, in order to give warning if he attempted to take possession of any of their depôts. On hearing that an artillery depôt had been founded at Salem (by the Americans), General Gage sent one of his officers with a small detachment to take possession of it. But a swift messenger got the start of him, and reached Salem first: the ordnance was removed from the magazines and scattered over the country; then the population who were in church when the English detachment arrived suddenly issued forth and gathered together, all armed, in front of the drawbridge. Upon the approach of the English the drawbridge was raised and Colonel Pickering, an American, informed the English commandant that the arms he had come to seize were the property of the people. Whereupon the English officer ordered his soldiers to seize a large boat in order to row across to the other side; but Joseph Sprague, the owner of the boat, immediately bored a hole in it, causing it to leak. Seeing that if he crossed to the other side a serious fight would ensue

[1] *Hist. des États Unis*, p. 232.

between his body of men and the inhabitants, who would end by gaining the advantage, owing to their steadily increasing numbers, the English commandant asked Colonel Pickering to allow him, in order to save appearances, merely to cross the drawbridge, pledging himself upon his honour to return to Boston and renounce his enterprise. Colonel Pickering saw no reason to refuse the request, and he ordered his soldiers, as well as the crowd of inhabitants, to withdraw to the two sides of the road. At last the drawbridge was lowered, the English soldiers crossed it, marching between silent ranks of patriots; after going a few yards beyond them they turned back, recrossed the bridge, and returned to Boston.

"A short time after, General Gage, on being informed that a large quantity of arms had been accumulated at Concord, about twenty miles from Boston, sent a detachment of 800 men, under the command of Major Pitcairne, with orders to take possession of it. Once again the expedition failed, owing to the vigilance of the patriots of Boston. It had been arranged that if they heard that a strong English expedition had made ready to leave Boston, a lighted lantern should be hung from the top of the church on the north side as a signal, and that a special watch should be set at Charlestown to look out for the appearance of the signal. On the night following the departure of the English detachment, the inhabitants of Charlestown who had been charged to watch for the signal saw the gleam of the lantern. Straightway the town was all agog, and messengers were despatched in all directions. The Bostonians, besides giving the signal to Charlestown, had also sent messengers into the country round. One of these, named Paul Revere, left Boston by boat, took horse as soon as he landed, and went to a house in Medfort which was the temporary residence of the two great promoters of the revolutionary movement, John Hancock and Samuel Adams. As he drew near at a gallop the sentinel called out to him not to make so much noise. 'Noise,' answered Revere, 'you will have enough of it in a minute. The regulars are coming!' After having done his commission with regard to Hancock and Adams, he continued on his way, stopping at all the farms on the road and arousing the inhabitants. While the American colonists were making ready their means of defence, the English detach-

ment crossed the bay, and following the edge of the marsh, in silence directed their course towards Concord. On a sudden the bells of the neighbouring towns began to ring, proving to the English officers beyond a doubt that the alarm had been given. While this was going on the inhabitants of Concord were carrying their ammunition out of the town and hiding it in the woods. So, when the English regulars arrived they only found a few cannons, which it had been impossible to remove and which they spiked; but they avenged themselves for their vexation by tearing down the 'poles of liberty' which the inhabitants had stuck up, and by burning the house where the magistrates used to meet.

"The Americans, who had withdrawn to the neighbouring hills on the approach of the English, had witnessed the deeds their enemies had committed in the town; they could no longer contain their anger, and advanced towards the bridge of Concord, which was occupied by an English detachment, and tried to dislodge it. After a short engagement the regulars dispersed, and the main body was seized by a panic, and followed them. The English officer then decided to beat a retreat. It was quite time to do so. He was more than twenty miles from Boston; the bells and the sound of firing had roused the whole country, and from all sides the inhabitants were hastening up without order or discipline to avenge their fellow-countrymen. Screening themselves behind the trees, rocks, and walls, the Americans aimed at the 'red-coats' as they passed. An English officer who took part in the expedition said afterwards that their opponents swarmed about them in such numbers that they seemed to have fallen from the sky. At each step several English soldiers fell dead or wounded; then those patriots who had just fired hastened to reload, and ran on ahead in order to bear down again upon the soldiers as they passed. Only a very small number of English would have escaped had not Lord Percy come to their assistance with fresh troops. He formed his troops into a large square open in the front, into which the fugitive soldiers came for refuge. An English historian says that they remained several hours stretched on the ground powerless to move and with their tongues lolling out of their mouths like dogs after a hunt. But the danger was not over; the woods were filled with rebels,

and in spite of his 1800 men and his pieces of ordnance, Lord Percy only with great difficulty succeeded in keeping the Americans at a distance. He beat a retreat very slowly, answering to the fire of the enemy, and his troops congratulated themselves at the end of the day upon reaching Boston, and were thankful to put themselves under the protection of the men-of-war anchored in the roadstead." [1]

That is the famous day of April 19, 1775, which opened the war of independence.

Immediately afterwards the Americans formed themselves into united bands like regular troops :

" Everyone stood in the clothes in which he left home, one in his old working jersey, another in his shirt sleeves, and almost all armed with hunting guns, hardly two of which had the same bore. Some of them, especially the men from Virginia, wore hunting clothes made of brown holland cloth with these words embroidered on the front : ' Liberty or Death.' They lived as best they could, building themselves huts of branches, and their food was of the coarsest ; they thought themselves happy when they had not to go altogether without it.

" The captures made by the Americans from the English stores soon improved their store of appliances." [2]

So much for the people.

These are their leaders :

When the appeal was made, immediately after the engagement at Boston, to form bands, as in regular armies, " the patriots flocked to the neighbourhood of that town. General Putnam, a colonist, was in the fields when a messenger arrived from Boston to warn him : he straightway abandoned his plough, and, without giving himself time to change his dirty shirt, he mounted a horse. On the morning of the next day he was at Cambridge (Massachussets), having travelled a distance of more than 100 miles in 18 hours. The story is told that General Gage was frightened at having so brave and experienced an adversary, and secretly offered to nominate him for the post of major-general in the English army, and in addition to give him a large sum of money, if he would consent to leave the rebel party. But General Putnam, when he put himself at the head of the colonists, meant to defend his own cause. In a short

[1] *Hist. des États Unis*, pp. 269–276. [2] *Ibid.* p. 296.

space 15,000 men were assembled round about Boston; and in spite of their absolute lack of acquired discipline, and the scarcity of ammunition, they considered themselves strong enough to attempt to keep the English army, which was composed of 5000 regular soldiers, shut up in the town." [1]

Let us end with the most famous of the leaders, Washington: "He was more than six foot tall, very broad across the shoulders, and very strong; perhaps somewhat heavy in his movements.

"He was born in the county of Westmoreland in Virginia, and was first a land surveyor, as was Lincoln in after years. He never had much taste for reading; born to an active life, he preferred to study men and things as he saw them in everyday life. He could well be called 'the most reasonable of great men.'

"In 1755 he distinguished himself in a war which the English made against the French in Canada. One day when the English had suffered a defeat he so skilfully handled his provincial militia as to cover the retreat of the English troops and save them from certain destruction. After the skill in manœuvres he displayed on that day he was made colonel and commandant of all the troops in Virginia. He soon left the service and married a young widow, whose two children he adopted. He devoted himself to the peaceful occupations of agriculture on the banks of the Potomac, improving his property of Mount Vernon, which he had inherited at the death of his mother.

"When the rupture with England took place, Washington left his favourite occupations and took part in the first Congress of Philadelphia. His noble character, and the notable part he played in the Canadian war, caused him to be summoned by the second Congress to take the command in chief of the American armies." [2]

I need not dwell on the issue of the struggle engaged in by the English colonists of America, remarkable as it was; but in that great event we have seen very clearly the traditional manner in which the gentry solved the fundamental question of the estate of small and moderate size, a question which had recently been brought forward in England during the seven-

[1] *Hist. des États Unis*, pp. 277–278. [2] *Ibid.* pp. 292–295.

teenth century by the creation of large estates, and by the other causes before mentioned of the increasing insufficiency of land in the metropolis.[1]

The gentry continued to solve the problem by creating fresh colonies either in America itself or in Australia, New Zealand, and East Africa. As for the leaders of the English people, they have learned to treat their colonies better: they have learned their lesson.

Now that we have seen the elucidation of the question of the estate, it remains for us to find out the solution of that of industry, which soon presented itself, as I said at the beginning of this chapter.

2. The question of industry.

It is obvious that the extraordinary development of industry in England was due to the fact that up till the rupture of the two countries she had rejoiced in the monopoly of supplying the American Colonies, which had become numerous and flourishing.

The lesson given by America also helped her. She understood that it is the wisest course to develop in industry, as in everything else, the energy that comes from struggling, and the attention needed for the incessant improvements upon which progress depends, in order to rise superior to all the disappointments caused by the failure of factitious means to success, such as monopolies.

From that time English industry strove to bring round the great landowners, who had, with such unfortunate results, made trial of the laws of commercial monopoly with the Colonies, to the more and more complete acceptation of free competition.

There are, of course, on every question, in every part whatsoever of the human race, some people who check, others who promote progress. This double tendency, which was only slightly marked owing to the homogeneity of the Saxon type, was then represented by the Tories and the Whigs.

The progress towards free competition was therefore made by slow degrees, under the balancing action of these two parties.

But the impetus was given by the manufacturers. And it is not difficult to understand with what vigour English in-

[1] See the previous chapter.

dustry developed under the influence of men who were eager for competition and who aimed at putting themselves in the way of becoming superior to everything under the system of the freest possible competition.

It is also easy to understand with what eagerness these manufacturers, who possessed all the Saxon fighting instincts, took up all the new mechanical and steam inventions which began to appear owing to the progress made by science.

Such was the origin of the immense and sudden development of industry in Great Britain.

It was at that time that the enormous urban centres, hitherto unknown in England, were formed : centres of industry, of commerce, mining centres for coal, the new and incomparable motor force.

The openings thus secured for the population in the metropolis alone were such that now, after scarcely more than a century has elapsed, the population of the towns is at least five times as large as that of the country.

England is a transformed country, and in comparison with agricultural England, she seems like a new territorial conquest.

But the growth of agriculture in England, on the contrary, did not slacken. The necessity of supplying these large centres gave an added stimulus to methods of agriculture, and, what is extremely important and of far-reaching influence, it opened the most magnificent market for the agricultural produce of the Colonies, both alimentary and industrial products, but mainly agricultural products for industry.

The relations brought about between the Colonies with their agricultural products and the manufacturing metropolis, which works for the whole world, caused a most extraordinary increase of the navy, and thereby an almost unlimited extension of territory in which it was possible for English systems of agriculture to take root. The whole world, wherever the climate is sufficiently temperate, is an open field for agriculture for English colonists.

In the Colonies, where she has not only commercial centres, but a Saxon agricultural population possessing estates of a small or moderate size, England founds not only commercial ports, but states which are united to her, and are as solid as old England herself, and which re-establish the equilibrium

between the Saxon agricultural population and the Saxon industrial population.

Moreover, even the Saxon industrial population has retained that essential and fundamental Saxon formation which makes the whole race aspire to the possibility of each individual making for himself an estate of moderate size, or at any rate a small one, where he may preserve his complete private independence, in whatever great industrial or commercial affairs he may be engaged.

That accounts for the fact that, generally speaking, the urban population alters the traditional Saxon type so little. It has remained deeply attached to the idea of the estate and the part it plays in relation to the liberty of the individual, whilst at the same time it has given a fresh impetus to the ancient energy of the race by enlarging, through industry, the field of competition, by increasing the force of the influence of personal initiative and the resources upon which people rely who make their way up in the social scale by their own efforts.

The United States of America, which are grouped on a contiguous territory, give a better illustration of this phenomenon, which is more difficult to grasp in the case of England, because her territory is so scattered.

The country between the Atlantic and the Alleghanies, which was entirely rural in 1776, as we saw, is now largely occupied by an industry which rivals that of England. Now, it is to the interest of these American manufacturers that the Western Territory should be inhabited by agriculturists in order to increase the production of raw material and the number of possible purchasers. The chief industrial and commercial towns on the shores of the Atlantic have among other things brought about the construction of enormous railways and the occupation of the vast stretches of land bordering them, by means of loans made to the farmers on the security of the estate. In this way industry is an employer of agriculture, and the American gentry, the now celebrated farmers, prosper, owing to the very thing which looks as if it is bound to abolish their class.

The rural gentry there, as in England, guarantees the stability of the country and of the race by constantly occupying

vacant lands in the form of estates of moderate size, which are characteristic of the gentry of the remotest times. So we again find in the end what we found in the beginning and all through the course of this history of the particularist form of society—namely, that rural gentry which to-day in America, as formerly and always in England, comes forward on occasion to support or repress those who are leaders of public affairs or initiators of enterprises which concern the future of the race.

Let us pay homage, as a finale, to Social Science, which, like sciences in general, enables us to grasp so firmly the admirably simple causes of the most powerful phenomena. Could Social Science have revealed anything simpler, or in a more precise manner, than the causes of greatness of the most powerful human race the world has yet seen ?

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Printed by MORRISON & GIBB LIMITED, *Edinburgh*

Telegrams :
'Scholarly, London.'

41 and 43 Maddox Street,
Bond Street, London, W.,
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